

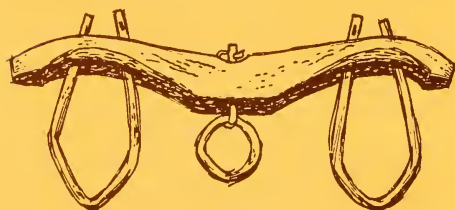
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*A Negro's
Life
of Lincoln*

WILLIAM E. LILLY

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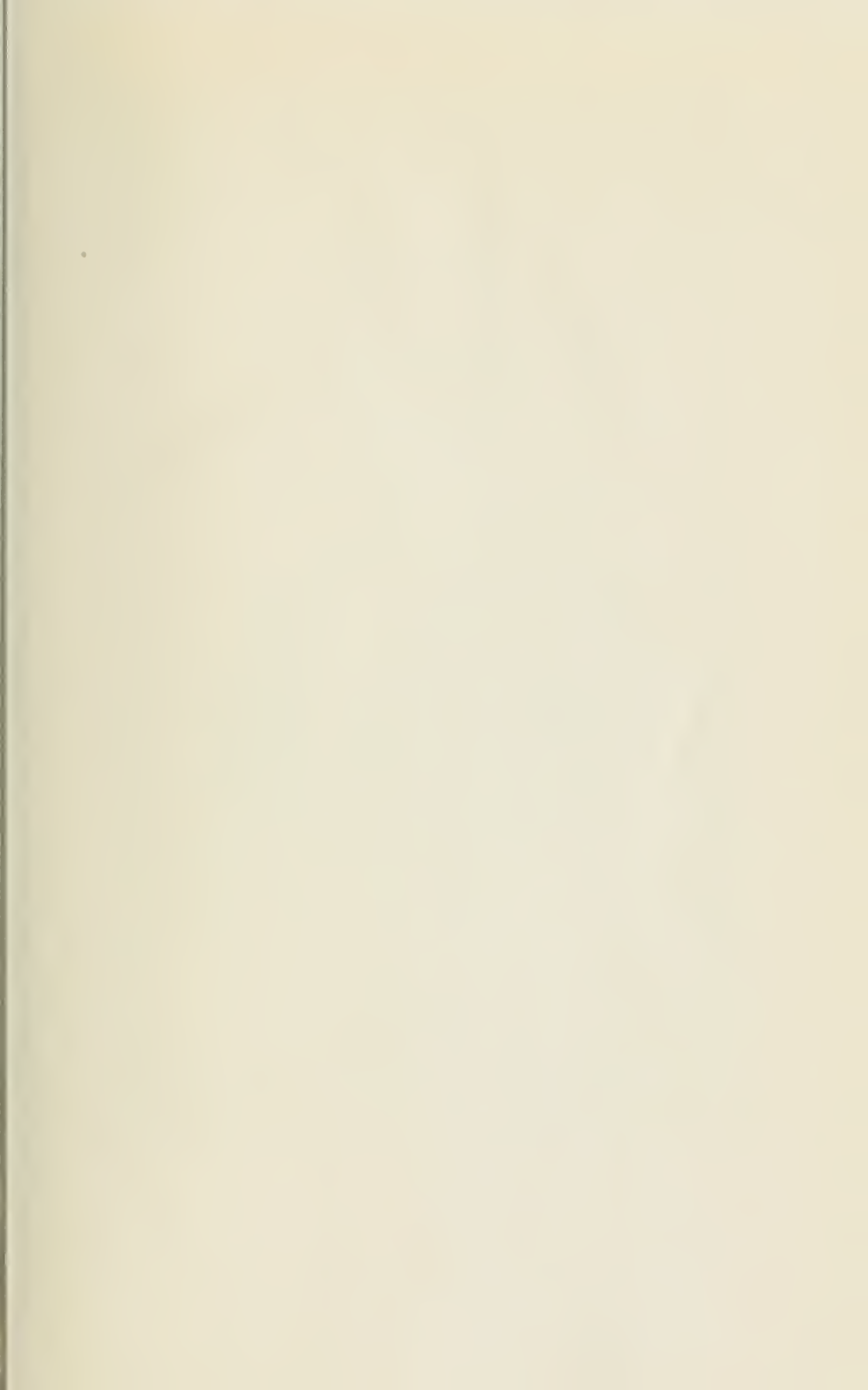


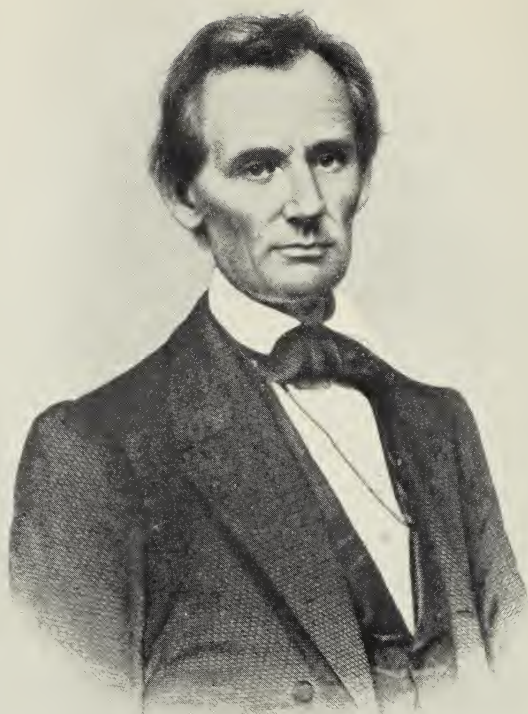


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A. Lincoln

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A Negro's Life of Lincoln

BY

WILLIAM E. LILLY



FARRAR & RINEHART

I N C O R P O R A T E D

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ABRAHAM LINCOLN

PREFACE

It has been but one full life span since the tragedy at Ford's Theatre brought to an end the work of one of the strangest men who ever gave great service to humanity. In the years since his death, the men he left behind have more and more grasped the assurance that in the passing of Abraham Lincoln, America lost the greatest of her sons. There may be much debate as to which should be ranked second, third, or fourth, but it is unquestionable that to this man most of his fellows look as the first of Americans.

And yet, when the political campaign of 1860 came to an end with the election of Abraham Lincoln, though by a minority of the votes cast, there were few among serious thinking patriots of the country that did not look with heavy anxiety to the future. At the most fearful crisis of its history, many believed it had chosen an inexperienced or unprepared man, if not, indeed, a mere shifty politician to guide it through the perilous days ahead. Some thought with regret of the experienced statesman, William H. Seward, defeated but a few months earlier at the party convention; others, of the tried statesman, Stephen A. Douglas, beaten for the Presidency.

In the difference of opinion between the men of that day and the men of our own, it is easy to see how vast has been the ascent of the fame of Lincoln. But fame is not always a fixed or stable quantity, and there are those who ask if the ascent thus attained is a definite quantity and one that is likely to be maintained? How, then, will it be with Abraham Lincoln?

For more than a quarter of a century the writer has been intensely interested in the strange being who came so opportunely—

“Up from prairie cabin to the capitol.”

This interest may have been accented by, but certainly was not primarily due to the fact that the writer himself belonged to the racial group of four million, transformed as by some stupendous miracle from the status of beasts of the field, as the victims of chattel slavery, to that of human beings, and with a qualified citizenship in the most democratic government of the time. The fame of Lincoln was a thing unique, and amply sufficed to sustain such an interest, based as it was, not on military triumphs, nor on religious zeal, nor as the founder of a nation or dynasty, the more usual sources of enduring fame. For interest in such a man no direct benefaction was needed, nor did one need to know that it was this man's signature that gave validity to the Emancipation Proclamation. It was enough that each succeeding year saw a constantly swelling tide of literature devoted to informing the world what manner of man was this.

Much of that literature the writer has read with avidity, and he remembers with pleasure the pages of Herndon

and Raymond, the State Papers, Miss Tarbell and Dr. Barton, Sandburg and Beveridge, the Nicolay-Hay Life, and the compilers of the debates with Douglas, as well as the perennial output of magazine and newspaper articles. And always he became more impressed with the verity of the phrase so often met with in descriptions of Lincoln: "A strange man."

Of late years I have hoped more and more that some bold venturer would come forth with something more definitive, with some word that might let us feel that we understood the man, no longer strange; the man who serious and sorrowful, yet constantly laughed and joked, and in either mood excited the compassion of these who came in touch with him. With some word, too, that might enable us to know how Time will deal with the fame of the man Lincoln.

Some may ask, how can one with the blood of the freed people in his veins, doubt the greatness of the man who gave that freedom? The answer is, that the question is not asked in any spirit of doubt, but rather with the idea of here and there, in the review of the eventful life of Lincoln, directing attention to, and stressing certain phases that do not appear hitherto to have been sufficiently noticed, and thereby adding possibly, another stone to the structure. The writer asks no greater honor.

In coming days it may not suffice to say that this man gave a measure of freedom to four million people. This and more might be equally said of the Czar, Alexander II, who two years before President Lincoln had attached his signature to the Emancipation Proclamation, signed a paper giving a measure of freedom to more than twenty million serfs. Like Lincoln, too, he died by the

hand of an assassin. The figure of the Czar who emancipated the serfs has become dim and dimmer with the passing years, the figure of the President who emancipated the blacks has become more vivid and dynamic. And yet, believing that the fame of such a man is secure and firmly placed, and "far above our poor power to add or detract," we have still ventured to offer the following pages in the hope of giving an added clarity to the general conception of the character and achievements of Abraham Lincoln.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE rapid rise of a man who but two years earlier was comparatively unknown to the nation, to the highest office in its gift, the tremendous achievements of his administration, the vast power he wielded with sanity, moderation and humanity, all point to a striking and unusual character. It is in the ordinary course of things, then, that closely following Abraham Lincoln's death, and ever since, there have been many conjectures as to the source of the powers displayed by him. Remembering the humble and illiterate parents and the unfavorable and depressing conditions of his early childhood, there were some who felt that such magnificent powers must have come from another source.

The ancients used to derive the lineage of their great ones directly from the gods. We smile cynically at this, but notwithstanding take a course somewhat similar at times, and even less logical. We insist that those to whom we ascribe greatness, and upon whom we sometimes thrust greatness, must trace their lineage to others who have had greatness ascribed to them, or possibly thrust upon them. And it appears that the connection does not have to be immediate or direct, but that some ordinary or mediocre personages may come between the

great ones. Thus our moderns may be fully satisfied that a man may have a valid claim to greatness if his great-grandfather had some such claim, even though the intervening links may have been most ordinary. It is seen, then, by this theory, that ordinary or mediocre folk may readily come from the great, but that the great may not come from the ordinary or mediocre.

Following this line of reasoning, there were those who were willing to question the regularity of the paternity of Lincoln, if only they could satisfactorily locate the source of his greatness. Herndon, for twenty years his law partner, relates that after Lincoln had attained some prominence in the world, persons who knew both himself and his father were constantly pointing to the lack of resemblance between the two. The old gentleman was not only devoid of energy and shiftless, but dull. And these persons were unable to account for the source of the son's ambition and his intellectual superiority over other men.

What is actually known of Lincoln's ancestry, is, that his paternal grandfather was killed by Indians soon after he had reached Kentucky from Virginia; that he left three sons, Mordecai, Josiah and Thomas, the youngest, at that time but six years of age. It was he who became the father of Abraham Lincoln. He is described as being five feet, ten inches in height, and weighing one hundred and ninety-five pounds. He is said to have had a liking for jokes, a thing noticeable in his son, and seems to have had no liking for steady labor, although he was a competent carpenter, according to the standards of his community. Herndon describes the mother, Nancy Hanks Lincoln, as "above the ordinary height in stature, weighed

about 130 pounds, was slenderly built and had much the appearance of one inclined to consumption. Her skin was dark, hair dark brown; eyes grey and small; forehead prominent and face small and angular, with a marked expression of melancholy." Mr. Lincoln once remarked that his higher intellectual qualities came from his mother, who was understood to be the illegitimate child of a well-bred Virginia farmer or planter. At another time he derived his power of analysis, his logic, his mental activity, his ambition, and all the qualities that distinguished him from the other members of the Hanks family, from this farmer or planter.

There is reason to believe that in the chemistry of high talent and genius there are yet many things to be discovered. Perhaps it is as logical to derive the genius of Abraham Lincoln from the humble, unlettered and uncultured Thomas Lincoln, as from the well-bred farmer or planter, who appears to have left the mother of his child to the uncertain mercies of an indifferent world. Certainly, the records seem to leave no reason for doubt as to the regularity of the paternity of the Emancipator.

CHAPTER TWO

A CHILD came into the world February 12, 1809, in Hardin County, Kentucky, amid conditions hard and inhospitable to a degree unusual even in a wild and unsettled frontier land. It is probable that there were few, even of the slave children, born at that period whose chances of life and the pursuit of happiness were much inferior to that of the babe born to Thomas Lincoln and his wife, Nancy. These were noticeably poor even in a group that was often contemptuously referred to as "poor whites." A loosely constructed, one-room cabin of logs without flooring, and with chimney of clay bound sticks climbing but part of the way up the outer end of the structure, gave scant protection to the babe and its parents for the first three years of its life. From this cabin the babe was taken to another, equally wretched, eight miles away, there to live the next four years of its life.

Then came an event, of no significance at the time, but in the light of later years of tremendous importance to the nation of which this babe was a part. The Lincoln family migrated to Indiana. The distance traveled in miles was not great. But in the more important measure of human ideas, the child had gone from the frontiers of one world to the frontiers of another. It had gone from a

land where the idea of slavery for some men prevailed, to a land where the idea of freedom for all men prevailed. From a land where, as the eloquent De Tocqueville said, "labor is confounded with slavery," to a land where "it is identified with prosperity and improvement." How vast was the gain for freedom in this seemingly insignificant event, only the passing of nearly a half century was to disclose. Then the man imbued with ideas of freedom that prevailed in the land in which he grew up, was the greatest individual force in overthrowing the idea of slavery that prevailed in the land where he was born.

The two-year period that followed the advent of the Lincolns on the soil of Indiana was filled with adversities so severe as to shake the courage even of those long inured to adversities. The fortunes of Abraham Lincoln, both as child and adult, were to pass through many valleys of darkness, but this first period north of the Ohio was the one most filled with shadows. Ordinary comforts of life, frequently found even at the outposts of civilization, were entirely missing. Only the bare necessities were there, and these in meager quantity. Here where the great river separated the two ideas of Freedom and Slavery, that were later to lead to "an irrepressible conflict," it is likely that grim hunger stalked always not far behind him who was to be the outstanding leader of that conflict. The lean, gaunt face, the bony limbs so noticeable in Lincoln, may have been the result of the long privation and under nourishment of those terrible years.

The practical mind of the boy Abe, once caused him, after hearing his father's words of blessing over a meal consisting only of roasted potatoes, to exclaim, in logical

if somewhat irreverent protest; "Dad, I call these mighty poor blessings."

Here the child spent his first year in the North, some sixteen miles from the river in a hut more wretched than any of the others. It was fourteen feet square, of small unhewn logs on three sides only, without a floor and with no need for doors or windows. From here the family moved to a better structure nearby, of hewn logs, with windows and doors, but with only the packed earth for flooring. That year the mother, Nancy Hanks Lincoln, died, leaving the boy Abe, then nine, and a sister two years older. After two years Thomas Lincoln married again. The step-mother, a source from which has sometimes come much unhappiness for children, was to be a mother in the fullest sense of the word. With her arrival the world of the Lincolns took on a brighter hue. In the place of dry leaves or corn husks, there was a feather bed. Chairs and furniture stood on the new floor that was soon put in the house, the first in the ten years of the boy's life.

Sympathy, love and wise guidance, the best heritage of childhood, were given in full measure by this step-mother who loved the boy Abe, even as she loved her own son, and who was loved by him even as he loved his own mother. In this new and friendlier world was developed that patience, perseverance and kindly courage, that was later to supply the place of a total lack of systematic school-training. Few of the great men who so often owe much to their mothers, have owed as much as did Abraham Lincoln to his step-mother, Sarah Bush Johnston Lincoln.

CHAPTER THREE

A WRITER speaks of the early Lincoln as "reading, incessantly and forever reading." Certainly his early absorption in books gave him the reputation of being strange. Any healthy young man giving his spare time to sitting or lying around with a book in his hand, would in that community have been so considered. We cannot wonder then that a cousin thought "there's something peculiar about Abe." Some thought him lazy, but more noticed that his jobs were well done and that there were few men in the section who could keep pace in the work of the field or forest with the lanky boy. Doubtless the boy's natural bent for argument and his love for talk did at times disrupt the regular swing of the field work. But when Abe Lincoln drew the other workers around him, whether to tell one of his inimitable yarns or to inform them of some new discovery in the vast wonderland of books, it was not indolence but energy of mind staying for the time energy of body.

The boy at an early age gained more than average skill as a scribe, and was soon a kind of community letter writer for the neighbors. Doubtless, some of Lincoln's later facility and clarity of expression may have been acquired through this practice of translating the clouded

ideas of these rustics into intelligible language. At sixteen he was operating a ferry over the Ohio as part of his work as farm laborer. Two years later he built a boat and operated for himself. Soon he desired to become a pilot, but not being of age was dissuaded by a friend.

The knowledge thus gained of the river was to lead to results profoundly influencing all his later life. Shortly after, young Lincoln is afloat on the Ohio and then on the Mississippi for a thousand miles to the South. Two years later he is again voyaging on the great river over which float the raw products of the new western lands, on to where New Orleans, mistress of an exotic civilization, strides across both banks of the river as it makes ready to hurl itself into the waters of the gulf.

Strange sights he sees there, and one that drives the iron into his soul. Born in a slave state, he had yet seen nothing of slavery. Hardin county, Kentucky, though several thousand miles in area at the time of the departure of the Lincolns for Indiana, contained less than four hundred slaves. But in New Orleans he sees the thing face to face. Men beaten and scourged, women sold from the auction block with babes in their arms. For the fault of being black. And white men and white women with souls reduced to the level of animals of prey, that they might wring their bread from the sweat of other men's faces while they talk of liberty and the land of the free.

In this same year of 1831, another young man who also had come into the world on the 12th day of February, 1809, but on the eastern shores of the Atlantic, set forth on his Odyssey. "Abe" Lincoln, aboard the small

flat boat which he and two kinsmen had built from timber which they themselves cut, began his voyage with the utter absence of training and culture, characteristic of the American "poor white" of that day. Charles Darwin began his voyage aboard the Ship Beagle, summing up in his person a thousand years of the culture of the upper class British. Neither the lack of training of the one nor the overtraining of the other, sufficed to stifle the soul of a genius, which each possessed.

Each discovered on his voyage the beginning of a mighty principle, a principle so mighty that it was to dominate all the after life of both. Charles Darwin developing his principle through a period of thirty years, gave to the world the Law of Evolution. Abraham Lincoln, developing his principle, through a period of thirty-two years, gave to his nation—"A new birth of freedom."

It was of course but the germ of this principle that came into being at New Orleans, and probably this was not fixed in the consciousness of Young Lincoln, until many years later. But there is reason to believe that more than any other, this was the vitalizing force which was slowly to transform the young man whom we see at New Orleans, wretchedly poor, untrained, awkward, into the Lincoln of mature age, in all this American land, the most powerful adversary of a theory, not only brutally vicious, but inconsistent with every principle and tradition of that "government conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal," which it threatened either to debauch or destroy.

But before this fortunate transformation should be wrought, much water was to pass down the Great River into the gulf, and many and mighty events were to come

drifting down the relentless currents of time. Young Lincoln after one month in New Orleans was to return by steamboat with his friends to the North. His fertile and reflective mind had doubtless gained much from the stay in that city. Such a mind could not fail to be excited at recalling that here, Americans, largely rustics like himself, had again, and finally, stopped armed British advances on this continent. Possibly too, he had learned that among these Americans were many "persons of color," as they were called, or Negroes, whose woes had daily moved him to indignation; that the material aid and warlike valor of these colored Americans in the achievement of that victory had been publicly acknowledged by the leader of the American hosts. Another strange man, the most dramatic figure in American annals, and one who brought to his battle against the British a resentment more real than that of the Carthaginian, sworn at the altar to undying hatred. For had not Andrew Jackson from boyhood carried the scar brutally inflicted by one of their officers?

The Lincoln family had moved to Illinois a year earlier, and "Abe" left the boat at St. Louis on his return, making the rest of the journey to New Salem, Illinois, his new home, on foot. Already young Lincoln was a notable figure in the life of the village. The inexhaustible stock of humorous stories which he had brought from Indiana, and which he told with such art as to give them an added humor, at once gained him a favored place with the villagers. To this was added an unfailing good humor, a range of book knowledge impressive in such a village, and a keenness for argument unmatched therein. But more impressive still to the men of the village, was the

fact that it soon developed that young Lincoln, at this time weighing two hundred pounds, was probably the strongest man and certainly the best wrestler in all that section. And it is likely that at the age of twenty-two years, the future President, himself, discovered a greater pleasure in these muscular triumphs than he ever did in those later years when the legal and political triumphs of Abraham Lincoln were bringing to him the praise of both his state and nation.

An important factor in Lincoln's rapid advance in the esteem of the village was his association with Denton Offut. He met this man soon after reaching Illinois, and it was for him that the trip to New Orleans was made. Very different was this fellow from the average stolid villager. He had imagination and buoyancy, and close ally to these, an extreme of the venturesome. "A believer in the pots at the rainbow's end," as pictured by the vivid Sandburg. There was a shrewdness, too, in his estimates of men, as we may surmise from his quick recognition of the ability of the tall, uncouth, poorly dressed young stranger, whose manner as well as appearance suggested the thought of "loafer" to some of the villagers. When we now think of this aloofness, there is a certain irony in remembering that the very name of New Salem would be lost, had it not been that this tall, uncouth, poorly dressed stranger tarried for a few years within its limits.

Offut was ungrudging in praise of the merit he at once saw and such merit as the slow villagers were themselves able to see, he enhanced, others less obvious he lavishly proclaimed. Small wonder then, that he who had lately

entered the village as merely "floating driftwood" was soon thereafter almost a celebrity.

Planning a store for the village, Offut ordered a stock of goods from Beardstown. Lincoln was employed as clerk, but a delay in the arrival of the store stock gave him the time to serve as clerk to the village election board, and after that to pilot a flatboat as far as Beardstown for a family moving to Texas. Returning by foot to New Salem he began his duties as clerk. Offut's volubility as to his clerk's wrestling prowess soon brought a test. At Clary's Grove, a nearby settlement, was a group of husky young fellows noted for their readiness in deciding any and all questions on the age old basis of superiority of might. On this basis the group appear to have several times argued impressively against certain of the New Salem folk. "Bill" Clary doubted the accuracy of Offut's claims to the extent of ten dollars. This amount, large for the time and place, was strong proof of the force of their respective opinions. The day of the test came on. Against Jack Armstrong, the Clary's Grove champion, Lincoln justified his employer's opinion. What is more strange, the Clary's Grove boys restrained their usual ardent disapproval of any mishap to one of their group. Such disapproval in times past had frequently been registered in the smashed faces of their opponents.

Jack Armstrong knew how to meet defeat without resentment, and instead of enmity a lifelong friendship followed. The victor became the proprietary hero of the Clary's Grove boys. They believed, too, with Offut, that "his clerk could outrun, throw down, or whip, any man in Sangamon County," and for years after they consti-

tuted themselves a kind of rustic Praetorian Guard, ready to advance the fortunes of their hero on any and every field.

Twenty-six years later, Abraham Lincoln, one of the best known lawyers of Illinois and a national figure in the political arena, postponed other legal engagements, forgot for the time his absorbing interest in tremendous issues that were hurrying the nation into the civil war, hastened to Beardstown, Illinois, and there successfully defended "Buff" William Armstrong, charged with murder. There was no fee for his services, for the defendant, on trial for his life, was the son of Jack Armstrong, recently dead.

CHAPTER FOUR

CHILDHOOD with its proverbial pleasures belied by hard experience, was gone. If it had fallen short in gifts of pleasure, much had been given in experience that was substantial preparation for the work of manhood. Thirty years later when leaders, wise in all the wisdom of the schools and skilled with the skill of long apprenticeship in statecraft, were baffled and impotent before the problem of a nation in the course of disintegration, it was a statesmanship based on this preparation that led the way to saving the nation.

For this man there had been no clear line marking the limit between childhood and manhood. For him the hard struggle for existence, generally assumed as belonging only to manhood, had begun not long after he began his conscious existence. In this early school of cold realities Lincoln had discovered the universal motive of self-interest back of the actions of men, whether of to-day, yesterday, or to-morrow. His mind had not been taxed with memorizing maxims of idealistic human conduct, told only to children. The knowledge of men thus acquired, he never forgot. In that school of early experience, too, he learned self-control.

No man ever stood at the head of a nation, who had

such mastery of his temper. Somehow, too, a keener sensitiveness to pain and suffering had been given him than to other men. On such a foundation was built a wisdom that was to suffice through all the storms of later years.

Whether it was because "he realized the deficiencies of his early education" or that he merely held to his early acquired habit of reading, Offut's clerk found time between customers for the thing he most liked. He was soon thrown in contact with Mentor Graham, teacher of the village school, and at his suggestion began to study with some idea of system. Included in this was a grammar which he secured after a walk of several miles.

Herndon has given us a description of the clerk "stretched at full length on the counter, his head propped up on a stack of calico prints, or in the shade of some inviting tree." The same writer says "he now and then turned with great relaxation to the more agreeable study of mathematics," and that he might have often been seen "lying face downward, stretched out over six feet of grass, figuring out on scraps of paper some problem given for solution by a quizzical store lounge."

Every store in that day carried a general stock of merchandise ranging from dress goods and shoes for women to hardware and "hard liquor" for men. Naturally, the store became a kind of social center where all the news of the village found circulation, as well as a forum where ideas, new and old, were debated with sufficient vigor to atone for any lack of skill. Happy days were these for Offut's clerk, genial, accommodating, highly social. Here he had work that was not too laborious, and that brought him in contact with many people.

And, too, that left him time for books, more and more books. These were the two things he cared most for, people and books.

Probably no period in the eventful life of Abraham Lincoln offered so much contentment as the few months when he was clerk for Offut. But alas! these happy days were soon to end. Offut's dreams of quick profits on his many ventures did not materialize with such speed as did the demands on his many obligations. And it so happened, in the early part of the year of 1832, that there was a financial crash in the village of New Salem.

Nor was this the only failure that fell to New Salem in that period of financial stress. And the other was more hurtful by far to the future of the village. The navigability of the Sangamon river was a weighty argument urged by New Salem folk on prospective citizens when pointing to the future greatness of their town. In the spring of 1832, the steamboat *Talisman*, under Captain Bogue, put out from Cincinnati loaded with merchandise on a voyage that was to be a demonstration of the matter. Early in April the boat was on the circuitous channel of the Sangamon which, swollen by the melting snows of early spring, made all well with the demonstration. Great was the joy at New Salem and Springfield. A rapidly receding river, however, soon brought the impressive celebrations to a gloomy end. It was necessary to secure two special pilots to extricate the *Talisman* from the uncertain currents of the Sangamon. Lincoln, as one of these, received forty dollars for getting the boat as far as Beardstown. The navigability of the river long remained an open question. Without a job

and on foot, but with forty dollars, then an impressive sum, in his pockets, again he arrived in New Salem.

An eventful year was this of 1832. Lincoln, clerk and pilot, is yet to play another role. Not long does he float as driftwood in the current of men without jobs. He is now to learn something of the grim business of war. Happy for him were this the only war he should know.

Financial troubles are now forgotten in New Salem. For have not Black Hawk and his five hundred Indian warriors turned the heads of their horses from west to east? And now they have crossed the Mississippi and are on the soil of Illinois. The Governor calls for volunteers.

CHAPTER FIVE

WHEN the men of Sangamon county assembled to answer the call of their Governor for volunteers, Abraham Lincoln had been in Illinois two years and in that county one year. It should not be forgotten, too, that he had come there conspicuously poor, arriving at New Salem without other property than a scant supply of ill-fitting, home-made clothes. In fact, his one possession with a selling value was the strength of his muscles. Nor had he either military experience or inclination.

This was the man that the men of Sangamon chose as their captain. In after years men were often to give this man that high acknowledgment of their trust and approval which Americans express by their ballots. Yet it is doubtful if in any of the political campaigns, most of them deliberately planned, he ever received so spontaneous a recognition of the confidence which he inspired in his fellows. Here was a triumph that was in no sense due to planning or preparation, but rather to a recognition of the man's capacity for leadership, and the fact that men saw in him a strength not seen in other men. There was about this man something that inspired in the masses of his fellows a confidence that was to carry him far in after days.

The Clary's Grove boys, always enthusiastic for a fight, and, in accord with their sectional antipathies, the more where Indians were concerned, naturally formed a fair quota of the Sangamon county company. Doubtless their profuse admiration for Lincoln directed attention to him and counted strongly in his election as captain. What to them was the little matter of a few years difference in the period of residence? What that he was as poor as the poorest? Was he not a good fellow, and the best wrestler, the best runner, and the best "rough and tumble" fighter they had seen? And it appears that they did not even intend to see any better. For when a fellow named Thompson, from another company, toppled their man in a match, and with his friends left with about everything the Clary's Grove boys had in the way of portable property, due to betting, they were restrained from a free-for-all fight only on the urgent appeal of the defeated Lincoln. The boys were left much poorer in tangible wealth, but still expressing great confidence that their man would have won had the other fellow "wrestled fair." Lincoln himself saw nothing unfair about the match unless it was, as he said, "the other fellow had the strength of a grisly bear."

In the reflective mind of the young captain there was none of the ready belligerency of his men, nor yet any of that mob ferocity which under such circumstances is so often generated by numbers rather than reason. Nor was there any of those grandiose dreams common to men of his age suddenly raised to leadership. Doubtless with his thoughts already directed to a political career, and with Andrew Jackson, blunt soldier, the strongest political figure of that day, he saw the possible advantages of

a soldier's record, since men so strangely worship their destroyers rather than their benefactors. However, close thinker that he was, the whole venture appeared little more than a jaunt which in the absence of a job might be well worth taking.

Almost invariably his references to this war were of a humorous nature, and many of his most laughable stories were concerned with his experiences. He tells in one how he had his company marching in wide platoon formation, when he saw a fence with an open but narrow gate-way. Near and nearer they came to that fence, but he could think of no command that would turn his company "endwise" and permit it to get through that narrow gate-way. The fence is but a few feet ahead when the captain, with a flash of that genius that comes from necessity, sharply ordered: "Halt! This company will break ranks for two minutes, and then form on the other side of the fence."

For Sangamon county men the war was without notable event. In fact, they failed even to get sight of hostile reds. Once, however, some of the men dragged in an old Indian, and the newer white Americans, in a frenzy of patriotic ferocity against the older red American, were then and there about to slay him. Thus would the new white American make clear his title to lands held by him and his for less than a generation, against the old red American who had trod this land for a thousand years. The old man, endeavoring to prove his friendly status, produced a letter from an American officer commending this Indian as friendly to the whites. The last estate of the old man was worse than the first, since the highly suspicious, if somewhat stupid soldiers

then took him for a spy. His end was not far off when their tall captain arrived and at the risk of personal violence to himself forced the men to release their prey.

The war ended with their only achievement the near murder of this ancient Indian, and for their captain that he had saved the old red man. Our knowledge of Abraham Lincoln makes us certain that this was a happier accomplishment for him than ever would have been any bloody victory over the tribesmen. A strange warrior, indeed, was this. For him, no conqueror's dream could hide the cruelties of war.

Young Captain Lincoln, his company having, with the end of the war in sight, been mustered out, remained in the army a short time as a private until that end was an actuality. This enlistment clearly indicates that his prior rank of captain had not weakened the inherent democracy of the man. Too, it sufficiently refutes an intimation that he had entered the war to give greater weight to his recently announced political aspiration for election to the State Legislature. Political expediency would have dictated an early return at the mustering out of his company, in order to better canvass the county.

He now arrived at Springfield but a short time before the election. On March 9, 1832, Lincoln had issued a circular addressed *To the People of Sangamon County*, announcing his candidacy and with it an argument on such questions as appeared likely to aid his election. In it he stressed public education as the "most important subject before the people." This was well known ground, for his own scant schooling was not to be forgot and he meant to see that others would be better prepared than he had been. He closed his argument with an appeal

to those in the lower walks of life and the independent voters of the county, and promised that if elected "he would be unremitting in his efforts to compensate them." There is a touch of sadness in the closing lines of the circular in which he says: "But if the good people in their wisdom shall see fit to keep me in the background, I have been too familiar with disappointments to be very much chagrined." Coming from a young man of twenty-three years, to whom the vista of mature life is just opening, such a statement discovers a poignant melancholy already woven into the mental fabric of Abraham Lincoln. It is the more odd, then, that some of his closest intimates and some of his wisest biographers, including Herndon, are found trying to account for the melancholy of the man by facts arising many years after the passing of his youth and early manhood.

In his first speech at the village of Pappsville near Springfield, after the not unusual general fight in which to save a friend he had to take a decisive part, one who was present recalled many years after that Lincoln announced himself to the crowd as "humble Abraham Lincoln" and after the usual bit of humor that was an expected part of a speech in that section, briefly proclaimed his support of a national bank, for an internal improvement system, and a high protective tariff. He brought the speech to a speedy end with the statement; "These are my sentiments and political principles. If elected, I shall be thankful; if not, it will be all the same."

Long afterward a master debater and orator stood before a vast assembly in New York City. Twenty-eight years of time separated the two events and a thousand miles of space the two places. And between the two

audiences and communities, how vast the difference in numbers; and in wealth and culture—how shall we measure the degree? And in the first instance, the speaker sought only the office of member of the Legislature, while in the second he sought the highest office the nation could confer. But to those who have thoughtfully read the speech at Cooper Institute, with its exhaustive and irrefutable argument against slavery as a permanent principle of American government, the outstanding fact, more noticeable than any of these, is the tremendous growth of the man who was the central figure of the two events.

CHAPTER SIX

JUDGE STEPHEN T. LOGAN with whom Lincoln was later associated, heard him speak at Springfield in this campaign and observed "that he made a very sensible speech." That he had novelty and peculiarity in presenting his ideas; he had individuality, despite the fact that "he was tall, gawky, rough looking, and his pantaloons did not meet his shoes by six inches."

His first campaign for political office ended in defeat. When the vote was finally counted it was seen that Lincoln was seventh of the twelve candidates, and only the first four were entitled to the office. Many times in after years was this man to appeal to the people for their approbation, and on each occasion the people were to answer in his favor. It is true that he was defeated for the United States Senatorship, but it was by the adverse vote of the State Senate after he had won the popular vote in the general election.

Probably, the most remarkable thing about this election was not that he lost, for under the surrounding conditions that was to be expected. But that a man who had been in the State and district only two years; a man who was not only property-less, but known to be extremely poor; a man who was dependent on his daily unskilled labor

for even the Spartan fare to which he had accustomed himself; that such a man should, out of the 208 votes cast in New Salem, receive all but three, was unusual indeed.

Some have accounted for this by the fact that Lincoln had advocated certain local improvements; but as there were eleven other men in the contest, and doubtless a number of these went just as far along this line as he, it is unlikely that such was the true explanation of this near unanimous vote. It is likely, of course, that local sentiment for the home candidate counted in his favor, as it generally does. Doubtless, too, the redoubtable Clary's Grove Boys with their enthusiasm ready to back their hero to the limit of their physical force, gave weight to his candidacy. But the true explanation was the personal popularity of the man. He had more than the physical strength of his fellows, and yet they found in him nothing of the bully, and having greater cleverness of tongue than the others, never used it to their humiliation. A man, too, who had an unfailing geniality, a ready jest and an apt; and, in accord with their likes, an often risqué story which went far in cheering their daily walk through the dull commonplaces of village life.

Such a defeat had in it much of the nature of a victory. It left little or nothing of depression, perhaps it added confidence in his own powers; possibly the encouragement of this campaign of defeat permanently fixed his ambitions along the line of politics. Certain it is that from this period he was always frankly and directly a seeker after public office. As persistent, whenever circumstances gave promise of success, as any of our present-day politicians. Indeed, he differed from these in little,

unless it be that in his constant quest for office the aim for money was never a primary motive. Not again would his ambition be satisfied with the rewards offered by common labor. Here was a man whose sinews were molded for a mightier work than would ever fall to the lot of an ordinary laborer.

Yet, defeated, without money and without a job, his future, at least as seen through other eyes, must have appeared somewhat gloomy. With William Berry, a young man, venturesome but given to drink, he bought the store of James and Rowan Herndon, kinsman of the man who was later his law partner. Neither of the partners possessed any money, but the Herndons had enough faith in them, or possibly enough lack of faith in the prospects of the store to make them willing to accept the promissory notes of the young men in the place of the uncertain future of the store. A short time after, the stock of a second and third store was added to their merchandise. In each case the owner had become discouraged with the outlook. For beginners, in a field so hazardous, the two partners had high courage.

The venture did not long stem the tide of ill-success which had been the common lot of merchants in the New Salem field. Something more was needed than courage and the spirit of venture. Neither of the partners displayed any aptitude for such business. If Berry had ever possessed such, his fondness for the liquor which was a necessary part of the store stock soon extinguished it. The other member of the firm, while a non-drinker, was probably not much more capable as a merchant. He never possessed the talent peculiar to the merchant, and in what may be termed the money instinct he seems always

to have been deficient. In his acts and calculations it was rarely a primary motive.

Aside from this, Lincoln's absorption in books, however laudable otherwise, distracted his mind from the demands of the store as much as the liquor stock distracted Berry's. The result, failure, was inevitable. Foreseeing and attempting to avoid the effects of this, the partners sold the store to two brothers on the usual basis of promissory notes. This was in the spring of 1833, but before the payment became due the store had failed and the latest purchasers gone to parts unknown. Berry's death, following soon, was attributed by some to excessive drink. Of the bold venture, only the debts of more than \$1100 remained for Lincoln. The surviving partner made no effort to evade the payment of the obligations thus left to him, although he might have avoided at least a part of them with no discredit to himself. Herndon tells us "he was a long time meeting these claims, even as late as 1848 sending to me from Washington portions of his salary as Congressman, to be applied on the unpaid remnant of the Berry and Lincoln indebtedness—but in time he extinguished it all, even to the last penny."

Defeated in politics and insolvent in business in a period of less than a year, his prospects might well appear to be going down rather than up the scale of prosperity. But along with these liabilities were certain assets in the way of loyalties of friends lately acquired but in after days of great service. Rarely has any man had the benefit of such loyal and timely friendships, and rarely has any man so well deserved them. Among them were teachers, lawyers, laborers, preachers, doctors, merchants, tavern keepers, and Jack Kelso, whose character has come down

to us as queer or even worthless. A drinking man, given to much fishing and hunting, but to no working. This man forbore to enter the scramble for wealth and the things his fellows thought worth while. Rather he chose to take for his own the vast riches of the language he spoke, to spend his time revelling in the beauties of Shakespeare and Burns and Byron.

Plainly a strange man, and so that other strange man, Abraham Lincoln, with something of the soul of the poet, was drawn to him. And many were the days they spent together, and new meanings found in the rhythmic lines of the bards, and new and far horizons stretched out before his eyes. And may it not be that in the measured swing of the loftier utterances of Lincoln, there comes down to us something of the spirit of the errant Jack Kelso?

But the business of existence made constant demands on him. That he might eat and sleep beneath a roof he now did any such tasks as the section offered, farm work, rail splitting, and occasionally helped a young merchant, A. Y. Ellis, to operate a store. Then in May, 1833, his friends managed to get him appointed as postmaster of New Salem, the first official position he ever held. While there was no fixed salary and the pay was in proportion to the small business handled at the office, it did something to help him through a difficult period, and he gave highly satisfactory service for the three years he remained in the village.

His necessities still drove him to such odd jobs as he could get, but eventually friends secured for him an appointment as assistant to the county surveyor, John Calhoun, and with the fees from these two places Lincoln

was probably for the first time on a level in earnings with his fellows. This man Calhoun was a New Englander and a Democrat, but he readily agreed to allow Lincoln full freedom in the expression of his political opinions, displaying thereby a liberality as noticeable as was the courage displayed by the young man of twenty-four years, who, despite his desperate financial condition, could still contend for freedom of political action. He had been fortunate enough to secure Blackstone's COMMENTARIES, and at once began the serious study of law, to which already some casual thought had been given. It was not long before he was actually taking part in small cases before the village Justice of the Peace. Beveridge tells us that "he began to practice in embryonic fashion before Bowling Green, who was enormously fat, weighing three hundred pounds and given to mirth. Green would shake with laughter at Lincoln's droll humor. Six feet four inches, his long bony finger pointed at the rotund Justice, clad only in shirt and trousers held by one linen suspender, he would reason with immense dignity and then convulse the squire with some ludicrous tale."

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE extent and variety of Lincoln's reading from the period when he began clerking in New Salem is a thing for astonishment. These might well be called his university days. Most of his spare time was spent in reading, and it was a common thing to see him walking along the street absorbed in his book. Those not informed of this period might well be excused for assuming as so many have done, that he was, if not a man of small learning, certainly not noticeable for the same. His absence of school training was generally known, and by his frequent reference to it became better known. A careless accent in these earlier days tended to confirm this belief in his lack of learning. And perhaps his carelessness as to dress, tending to give an appearance of the uncouth, fixed the belief more firmly, at least in the minds of the superficial. The man himself with his odd but keen sense of humor, and with a lack of that kind of pride which exults in mere show, probably got no little amusement out of this error. Occasionally some antagonist with an assumption of superiority arising from this mistake was sharply discomfited by Lincoln's generally kindly but at times biting sarcasm.

There were a few men in the village of New Salem

of fairly wide reading, some of whom were familiar with the cultural revolution of Europe in the last half of the eighteenth century. It is a tribute to young Lincoln that he was soon on terms of intimacy with them and on even more intimate terms with their books. Always a new book appealed to him as some new world calling for exploration. It is something of a paradox that the man whose largest claim to fame is based on having saved a great nation from ruin, found at this time his largest interest in works that had for their chief theme the causes that underlay the slow decay or sudden catastrophe which had in past ages taken other great nations down to ruin. Among the works studied by Lincoln at this time were Rollin's *ANCIENT MONARCHIES*, Volney's *RUINS*, and Gibbon's *DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE*.

This last remains the noblest historical work in the English language. That a man should have been thought unlearned who had delved so deeply in works such as these, seems somewhat preposterous. It is a kind of deference paid to the fixed mental roadways along which the schoolmen travel in herds. And yet a score of universities might not have revealed to Lincoln the profound lessons that he found in the pages of these books, nor would a hundred such have discovered for him such incomparable teachers.

Lincoln had been singularly fortunate in his books, and possibly even more fortunate in another avenue of preparation for that day when the last measure of preparation was to be sorely needed. He came to maturity in a section where every store was a forum in which was debated in all its phases the fateful question on the right-

ful solution of which a nation was to be or not to be. Nowhere else in the land was slavery debated more vigorously than in Illinois, holding as it did within its limits numerous partisans of every phase of the question and under conditions that made for full freedom of discussion.

Soon his wide reading brought him in touch with the opinions of two men, each of whom had wrought mightily in the affairs of their fellows. Thomas Paine, whose book *COMMON SENSE*, had in the darkest days of the Revolution earned him the lasting gratitude of Americans from George Washington down to the lowest man in the rank and file, had some twenty years later written *THE AGE OF REASON* which had done as much to lastingly irritate this same rank and file. Lincoln, however, found pleasure and much interest in the book. Soon thereafter he read some works of Voltaire. The militant English deist who in the years of peril had fought for freedom in America against England, and who in the greater years of peril had fought for political and religious freedom in France against Europe, was thus joined with the great Frenchman who had spent a large part of his life in exile because of his never ceasing struggle for freedom of ideas in his native land, and who for a generation had dominated Europe by sheer force of intellect.

Remembering that one of these men had by the force of his pen closed the ranks of wavering Americans when panic and apathy threatened to end the fight for freedom, and that the war of the other against the brutalities and extravagances of the governmental and social systems of France had more than any other single force brought on the French Revolution, is it surprising that the two exer-

cised a profound influence on this son of the American backwoods? The immediate result was that he, too, dared pen his argument against orthodox beliefs, a vastly more serious temerity in democratic America with its theories of free speech than in monarchical Europe with its idea of restricted rights. A friend destroyed the paper and thereby saved to Lincoln his popularity, the sole capital on which he was to take the earlier steps of that long journey to the Presidency. Lincoln and America owed a tremendous debt to that far-seeing friend.

Now, if there are still those who are curious to know why it was that a man who was not inclined to scoff, but was in fact highly religious, never united with any church, it is altogether likely that the answer is to be found here in the influence of Thomas Paine and François Marie Arouet, whom the world knows as Voltaire. And, too, if it should be discovered that in the noblest of Lincoln's eloquence, the frequent references to a power above that of mortals are addressed only to the first member of the Christian Trinity, again the underlying cause is likely to be the deism of Thomas Paine and the rationalism of Voltaire.

A strange lapse is this for one who all his life had been surrounded by folk, who as the final test of salvation held to a literal belief in the Bible from its first to its last miracle and to the eternal burning in the fires of hell of apparently the largest part of their fellows. What an incongruity is this? On the extreme rusticity of the backwoods of the American frontier is found grafted the tenets of the English prophet of deism, joined with the final conclusions of the favorite philosopher of the boulevards of Paris.

From the union of such diverse elements, a man already strange became more strange. It is these things that make us understand how Herndon, who knew Lincoln for nearly thirty years and most of the time intimately as his law-partner and friend, could say in the end: "I never fully knew or understood him." Certainly, however, here was no untrained, uninformed man. Uncertainties might yet remain in the chain of his knowledge, crudities of language might creep in for awhile, but in the matter of fitness for the labors of a future day he had that competency that comes from painstaking and timely preparation.

CHAPTER EIGHT

ANOTHER election approaches and Lincoln is again a candidate. This time he has more confidence and there is less uncertainty in his manner. He has learned many things in the two years following his first effort for the place. He is now familiar with the principles of the leading political parties, and with the deeds of the foremost political leaders of the day. He had been a regular reader of several of the leading papers, including the *Sangamon Journal*, of Springfield; *Louisville Journal*, *St. Louis Republican* and the *Cincinnati Gazette*, and as he reads with special interest all political matters, he is probably as well posted as any other candidate in the field, whether in general knowledge or ability to present his political views. Even in the mere matter of appearance and dress it is a stronger man who seeks to be a member of the legislature in 1834 than in 1832.

As postmaster of New Salem the returns in money had, as was expected in a town of that size, been small, but the opportunity it had given to enlarge the number of his acquaintances had been large. Needless to say, knowing the man, it had not been neglected. Others before him had been content merely to hand out the

mail to those who came for it. This postmaster did not hesitate to make deliveries of neighborhood mail at all times when on trips that took him near any of the patrons. As a surveyor, too, he came in touch with new people in all parts of the county. On these trips his wide knowledge of public questions and public men, gained from his close newspaper reading, his seemingly inexhaustible supply of humorous stories and inimitable manner of telling them, his uniform good nature, gave him a strong hold on these new acquaintances and generally ended in strong friendships. His unusual readiness to help another in distress and willingness to go to unusual limits in doing so, drew men to him. It is a noticeable thing that rarely did any friend of Abraham Lincoln's cease to be his friend.

In the dark days that were to come, when so many other things were being dissolved: friendships between man and man and loyalty between men and state, when the nation itself appeared in the course of dissolution, he who had been this man's friend on either side of the question which was breaking all other ties, remained his friend. Even though that other happened to be the next in office to Jefferson Davis himself, Alexander H. Stephens, or some general in open arms, as George Pickett in the front ranks of the Confederate forces at Gettysburg.

It is a matter of particular interest that Lincoln now announced himself as favorable to the principles of the Whig party. This is somewhat surprising, since the Democratic party was undoubtedly the party of the majority in that section and held within its ranks most of the socially elect, many of whom were southern men

from Kentucky and Tennessee. Strong pro-slavery men they were. John G. Nicolay who knew the section well has observed: "It showed some moral courage and certainly an absence of the shuffling policies of the fairweather politician that Lincoln in his obscure and penniless youth at the very beginning of his career took such a course."

A native of Kentucky himself, young, ambitious and popular, it seems natural that he should have aligned himself with this group and on the side of the majority with its brighter prospects. If then he chose rather "to oppose a furiously hostile and intolerant majority" and to take his stand with a party "long doomed to defeat," is it not worthwhile to try to ascertain the underlying cause? It is true there is no authoritative source from which this information may be had, but there is much reason for inferring that the answer may be found in the question of slavery.

While none of the great political parties had made a definite issue of the slavery question, and while sectional lines had little to do with party affiliations, and, further, all shades of opinion as to slavery were found in every great party, it was the Democratic party that leaned most definitely toward pro-slavery ideas and the Whig party that gave most promise of opposition to it. Having these facts in mind we need only to recall that four years earlier a young man, very poor and limited in learning, had as a hired man on a flat boat worked his way to New Orleans; that he had there first seen the realities of slavery, had visited the slave market, had there seen a woman being sold to the highest bidder with the incidental brutalities connected with such barbarism. Recall, too, the exclamation of disgust wrung from him as he

left the place: "Come on, boys, let's get away from here. If I ever get a chance to strike that thing, by God, I'll strike it hard!"

With most of his now large number of acquaintances it was enough to let them know that he was a candidate to have the assurance of their votes. His campaigning, therefore, had in it more handshaking and less formal speechmaking. Occasionally, however, there were strangers to whom arguments must be made, a matter of no difficulty to him now. Sometimes, too, there were the old feats of strength, for men always have been, perhaps always will be, impressed with such. Once, being introduced to some field hands at work harvesting wheat, he accepted as a challenge the statement made by some of them that they believed in a man who knew how to work. "Taking a cradle and handling it with ease and remarkable speed he soon distanced those who undertook to follow him."

In August the election came on. The final count showed that he had received next to the highest vote. His friend John T. Stuart received the lowest vote of the four men elected. It is said that in his efforts to help Lincoln he neglected his own interests and came near being defeated.

That he might "make a decent appearance in the legislature, Lincoln had to borrow money to buy suitable clothing." Coleman Smoot, another one of his friends, advanced him two hundred dollars for this, which was returned in due time.

CHAPTER NINE

LINCOLN displayed much activity from the very beginning of his term in the Legislature, and was not long in establishing himself as one of the leaders of that body which then sat at Vandalia. This was no small attainment for a man of twenty-six years.

From the work of the Legislature he returned to New Salem in 1835, there to become a party to an event which some are convinced was the supreme tragedy of a life that others regard as little less than one long tragedy. Though twenty-six years of age, he had passed through the most emotional period of life and the period most susceptible to the attractions of the female sex, without having been noticeably touched by such influence.

Soon after arriving in New Salem he had become acquainted with James Rutledge and his family, the wife and nine children. The third child, Ann, appears to have been highly attractive, well endowed with beauty, quickness of mind and talent in the arts of homemaking. Already the attention of the young men of the village was drawn toward her. Soon it was seen that John McNeil, a young merchant, blessed with looks and a financial talent that had enabled him to become worth more than \$10,000, in three or four years, was Anne's favored suitor.

It became known, probably in the early part of 1832, that they were engaged, though no date had been fixed for the consummation of their vows.

Other facts are less clear, but it appears that shortly after the engagement became public McNeil made known to Ann that his real name was McNamar, which information he likewise gave to Lincoln who had drawn some land conveyances for him. He explained that his father had failed in business in their eastern home and was being harassed by creditors; the son desired to avoid possible financial entanglements from that source and in doing so had gotten out of touch with his family, though only with the desire to get himself on a sound financial basis. Having done this in the summer, McNamar made known to Ann that he was going East for his parents and on his early return the wedding would take place. To this she agreed and looked cheerfully to the future. There were the usual letters between lovers for a short time following McNamar's departure. Then the intervals between the letters of the departed became longer and longer. It was explained that he had been severely ill, part of the time unconscious with fever, but his later recovery did not alter the condition. Finally the letters ceased altogether, though not before they had lost the fire so characteristic of the letters of lovers.

Doubtless the village tongues wagged at a faster rate, and with the tendency to cruelty so general to small communities in such matters. This continued for probably two years, one of the most difficult situations that can face a young woman, but the girl was hopeful and possessed of high courage. Lincoln had been a roomer at the inn kept by the Rutledges in the early days of

the courtship. He had always been conspicuous more by a hesitation amounting to bashfulness, rather than by anything like gallantry in his attitude toward young women; and poorly dressed and ill-favored with looks as he then was, it is unlikely that he was among the suitors of Ann Rutledge. Certainly nothing was known of any love affair between the two until on the very eve of the tragedy so soon to ensue.

James Short lived near the Rutledge family after Rutledge had given up innkeeping at New Salem and moved to a farm owned by McNamar. The mother of Ann worked for Short at times and possibly Ann herself. Neither mother nor daughter ever made any mention to him of any love affair with Lincoln, whose close friend he was and for whom he had done many acts of kindness. Nor did Lincoln himself, a frequent visitor at the Short farm, ever give any indication of being in love with Ann. Apparently, no one looked upon him as anything more than a friend of the Rutledge family, the head of which had been one of the first to encourage his political ambition.

All the more strange then are the things that soon came to pass. In the early summer of 1835 the young woman took to her bed with a serious illness. Whether her illness was due to the long period of hopeless waiting, with its sorrow suppressed with so much difficulty from the prying eyes of the villagers, we do not know; nor whether there was an inner conflict in which the girl was harried with the claims of two men, one long absent, yet holding her plighted word, the other present, silent and patient, and to whom she could always turn with unfailing assurance of sympathy. Nor do we know if

some more prosaic cause such as typhoid fever may not have been the cause of her illness. Each of these has been mentioned. But we do know that after weeks of suffering the young woman repeatedly called for two men, her favorite brother and Abraham Lincoln. When Lincoln came the two were left together for an hour or more. Those who saw him when he left declare that there was in his face a look of tragic distress. A few days later and Ann Rutledge died.

The death of the young woman left Lincoln so obviously overwhelmed with despair that his friends were seriously concerned with fear that his mind might collapse. Already with a strong tendency to melancholy, there appeared to be much danger of self-destruction. If we are puzzled at the many reports that have come down to us, showing a rugged young giant of remarkable physical power as completely undone by the loss of a loved one as some romantic girl, we must recall that these reports are too well vouched for to be entirely set aside, and remember that this was indeed a strange man.

Herndon relates: "If when we read what the many credible persons who knew him at the time tell us, we do not conclude that he was deranged, we must admit that he walked on that sharp and narrow line which divides sanity from insanity." To one friend he complained that the thought "that the snows and rains fall upon her grave, filled him with indescribable grief." His condition finally became so alarming that on the advice of these friends he gave up his regular pursuits and went to the home of Bowling Green, his old friend, in the country. There, tenderly watched by Nancy Green, the

wife, his mind gradually caught up again the scattered interests of life and the zest of other days, and after some weeks he was again back among his fellows. But many among them believed that the joy of life known to other men, left him in these dark days never to return. And that the deep troubled eyes which men in after days so often noticed and remembered came from the agony of soul which followed the untimely passing of Ann Rutledge.

CHAPTER TEN

HIS work as legislator becoming greater with his greater experience, his law studies assiduously pursued along with his labors as surveyor, now kept him closely occupied. And well it was that this was so, since his mind was thus forcibly withdrawn from the gloomy contemplation of the recent tragedy. At this time there was a great amount of speculation in certain communities as to land values, and so rapid was the increase in the price of land in some sections that much farm land was surveyed and laid out in town lots. The added fees thus received, with the salary as member of the Legislature, with occasional amounts received for small legal services brought his earnings up to the point where his fellows were beginning to bestow on him that special respect which is given only to those who achieve prosperity.

No more congenial work had ever fallen to the lot of Lincoln than that which was his in the Legislature. Here he was in contact with the ablest men in the new State, some of them of real ability and most of them of great ambition, not a few of whom would grave their names deep in the records of Illinois. And the names of some would spread far beyond state lines and become a part of the nation's achievements.

With the end of the legislative term not far off, it is not surprising, then, that he again announced himself as a candidate. As in his first attempt four years earlier, he now issued a notice to the voters, but this time there is none of the obvious lack of confidence and hesitancy that characterized the other. And with the added confidence there were propositions more clearly stated and of greater practicability. He had not reached the preciseness of statement that he was later to attain, but this notice was not below the average of its kind at the time and place. The notice in the form of a letter to a newspaper runs as follows:

“New Salem, June 13, 1836.

“To the Editor of The Journal:

“In your paper of last Saturday I see a communication over the signature of ‘Many Voters’ in which the candidates who are announced in the Journal are called upon to ‘show their hands.’ Agreed. Here’s mine:

“I go for all sharing in the privileges of the government who assist in bearing its burdens. Consequently, I go for admitting all whites to the right of suffrage who pay taxes or bear arms (by no means excluding females).

“If elected I shall consider the whole people of Sangamon my constituents, as well those that oppose, as those that support me.

“While acting as their Representative, I shall be governed by their will on all subjects upon which I have the means of knowing what their will is; and upon others, I shall do what my own judgment teaches me will best advance their interests. Whether elected or not, I go for distributing the proceeds of the sales of public lands to

the several States to enable our State, in common with others, to dig canals and construct railroads without borrowing money and paying the interest on it.

"If alive on the first Monday in November, I shall vote for Hugh L. White, for President.

"Very respectfully,

"A. LINCOLN."

As yet the question of slavery had not reached the surface of things political in this section, and neither Lincoln nor any other candidate makes any mention of it. Not long, however, will this question remain obscured by lighter issues. Already there are violent rumblings and earth tremors, politically speaking, in bleak New England, where slavery has not taken and will not take root. Has not a mob in Boston but a year earlier laid violent hands on a man by the name of Garrison, and by so doing brought to his aid another who in his capacity to make the world hear what crimes are being committed in the name of liberty, is the equal of Garrison himself? Twin flames of freedom, William Lloyd Garrison and Wendell Phillips, and mighty is the conflagration which they and the earnest and uncompromising souls who believed with them, are so soon to light in the so-called Land of the Free. Verily, can it be said of them that not before or since has this American land seen such a spirit of disinterested devotion to an ideal.

It will be noticed that Lincoln's letter does touch on one far reaching question, one which like that of slavery will be much discussed in after days, and like that, too, in its final adjustment will take its place as a part of the Constitution of the United States. The question of woman

suffrage had not risen to the status of a problem at that day. Nowhere was there any large or organized demand by women for the vote. Among men the vast majority had hardly even considered it, and then merely as an academic social question. Certainly, its advocacy gave no promise of added votes to the candidate, and so it may be concluded that strong conviction alone could have induced the mention of it. He was but twenty-seven years of age and, mayhap, the tragic memory of Ann Rutledge gave him the desire to sponsor remedial legislation for the women of the land from which she had so lately forever departed. We may measure here how far he was in advance of the thought of his time by recalling that this proposition which involved no great clash of interests, individual or public, as did slavery, and which likewise contained no economic threat against any group or section, would not become a part of the law of the land until after the passing of more than eighty years, and a half century after the overthrow of slavery.

Lincoln closed one of his speeches in this campaign with a stinging sarcasm aimed at George Forquer, a man of prominence and a lawyer who had shortly before quit the Whig party for the Democratic, and at near the same time had been appointed to a remunerative office. This man who had just completed the finest residence in Springfield, with a lightning rod attached thereto, the first in the section, in a speech with Lincoln present had sharply disparaged his candidacy. Mr. Lincoln, replying, said among other things: "I desire to live, and I desire place and distinction; but I would rather die now than like the gentleman, live to see the day that I would change my politics for an office worth \$3000 a year, and then feel

compelled to erect a lightning rod to protect a guilty conscience from an offended God." Forquer and others saw that the man who could summon such ready sarcasm to his aid was at all times a dangerous opponent.

It was no surprise that Lincoln was again elected, nor yet, of the nine men elected, including the two Senators, that he received the highest vote; but it was a surprise that the Whigs defeated the Democrats for the first time in Sangamon County. He was a recognized force in this new Legislature before which was the question of naming a state capital. That Springfield was chosen was in no small way due to the activity of Lincoln. Also it was due to him as much as to most of the leaders of the Legislature, more sanguine and ambitious of their State's early rise to wealth and greatness than possessed of far seeing financial wisdom, that the State was saddled with an indebtedness for internal improvements so immense that for many years the question of repudiation was a serious issue with the taxpayers. Some have ascribed his failure to foresee the disastrous results of this legislation by which twelve million dollars were voted, to his lack of money sense. The conclusion does not appear weighty when we remember that this legislation had behind it most of the leaders of the Legislature as well as the great majority of the rank and file of members, many of whom showed no little talent in managing their private interests.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THERE were more than a hundred members in this Legislature, not one of whom was born in the State for which he was now to formulate laws. Illinois had at that time no fixed policy to which its legislative body might adhere, but each of these men brought to this body some part of the State from which he had come. Kentucky had a larger quota than any other, but there were few that did not have some one of its sons there at the capital in Vandalia. An open forum was this, before which all the varying arguments that could be drawn from the institution of slavery could be presented with a boldness not always feasible in the older States.

In this Legislature sat Stephen A. Douglas for the first time, and it was not long before he had presented a resolution and bill for the creation of a new county, which was opposed among others, but more conspicuously, by Abraham Lincoln. So began the personal conflict between the two, probably the longest and certainly the most constant and far reaching in American annals. Few questions came before this Legislature that did not find them actively battling on opposite sides. Ambitious they both were, which the more we may not say, though it is certain that Stephen A. Douglas was more ready to pay

any price that ambition might demand for the ends he aspired to attain than Abraham Lincoln.

Despite the importance of the question of internal improvements and that of locating a new capital, national politics was soon furnishing the dominant issues before this Legislature. But six years before William Lloyd Garrison had established the *Liberator* and in that first issue had declared: I WILL BE HEARD. Never had promise been more completely fulfilled. The tribune of the slaves was now being heard to the farthest ends of America. Men might cry peace, peace, southern States might furiously villify and northern States deplore and censure, but this man and the increasing number of fearless souls who saw with him, with voice and pen, kept holding the ghastly crime of slavery before the eyes of the perpetrators, and before a condemning civilized world.

The Virginia Legislature passes resolutions, condemning the abolitionists and warning other States. Kentucky does likewise. Alabama and Mississippi add their sterner warnings to a North already alarmed at possible deficits in the region of the pocketbook through trade losses. These southern States are now issuing what is practically an ultimatum that the northern States pass laws restraining the abolitionists. They would strike down this devoted group though they strike down the Constitution at the same time. Profits must be maintained whatever else may hap. Connecticut replies, approving the justice of the slave-holding States, but thinks it unnecessary to enact laws restrictive of the press, and adds cryptically: "Truth and Justice have nothing to fear from a free press in an enlightened community." A marvelous conception is this of truth and justice hand in hand with chattel

slavery, and in an enlightened community. A New England State in the nineteenth century, hands down a conception of truth, justice and enlightenment on a level with the ideas of the first ages of civilization. If it appear that here is some strange inconsistency, then we need only recall the vast mill towns of that section with their thousand fold looms for the manufacturing of cotton cloth. New York also spoke soothingly to the South, and other States.

Now there is a resolution before our Illinois Legislature. It strongly condemns the abolitionists, bewails the hurt they are doing to the slaves. Strange solicitude is this. It was adopted January 20, 1837, by a vote of 77 to 6. Lincoln and five others have seen fit to vote against it. Their reasons are not set forth. Six weeks later a resolution of protest signed by Dan Stone and A. Lincoln is spread on the journal of the House. It proceeds as follows: "We believe the institution of slavery is founded both on injustice and bad policy, but that the promulgation of abolition doctrines tends to increase rather than to abate its evils." This resolution, brief in verbiage but comprehensive in scope, differs from the abolitionists as to the possible result of their efforts, but has no condemnation for them; and if it does not condemn the slaveholders in person, it is a complete indictment of the system of slavery based both on morals and sound policy. Others, whether in high place or low, whether President of this American land or some humble laborer, might grope uncertainly during the next twenty-three years for a fixed policy with which to face the terrific storms of passion that were to sweep over the nation. This young man barely twenty-eight, had announced the base on which he

pitched his battle against that monstrous iniquity, and so firm was this base that never after did he need to change or shift his position.

This resolution of protest has an especial interest for us of a later day because it sets forth the ground upon which was to be waged slowly but effectively, for more than a quarter of a century, the struggle that was to end in the destruction of chattel slavery. As an important state paper it has been strangely overlooked, both by the historians and the hundreds of Lincoln biographers. This is the more strange since the man who has been recognized as the foremost of Americans adhered to its terms with singular fidelity, not only in the days of his obscurity when he was still striving for recognition in Illinois, but in that later day when the word of Abraham Lincoln carried beyond the bounds of that State and even to the farthest ends of America. Both in word and action all his after life in politics and statecraft was in accord with this resolution, set out in his twenty-eighth year. Whether we consider it as far-seeing calculation or unvarying consistency, it is probable that the like has not been witnessed either before or since in American annals.

Whether Dan Stone, a lawyer already well known in his district and profession, or Abraham Lincoln, still a mere student in that profession, drew the resolution, we do not know. But we do know that it outlined the course of action that was to be followed by the latter with regard to the paramount issue that confronted the American people through all the days that saw the rise of Lincoln from the place of member of the Legislature to that which saw him as President of the United States.

This will be readily seen by an examination of the

three paragraphs of the resolution devoted to declaring the views of the two bold signers of the paper. The paper is divided into five paragraphs containing less than a hundred and fifty words. The first, we have already seen. The second declares "that Congress under the Constitution, has no power to interfere with the institution of slavery in the existing States." There was nothing new or startling in this pronouncement. It was in accord with the settled opinion of the day and questioned only by the more extreme abolitionists.

The third paragraph asserts, "that Congress has the power under the Constitution to regulate slavery in the District of Columbia, but that it ought not to be exercised unless at the request of the people of the District of Columbia." Here in this proposition that resolution has reached dangerously controversial ground, and has taken square issue with the resolution sent as an ultimatum by the Legislature of Alabama to the various northern States. It constituted in settled fact the field on which was to be waged a hundred civic battles in the various State legislatures, the Congress of the United States, and in all the courts of the land, even to the final court of appeals, in the vain effort to find a solution for a problem that had no solution save that which would be finally found on a hundred battle fields.

The first paragraph had declared slavery to be founded on injustice and bad policy, and might seem to some the bolder pronouncement. It is likely, however, that the abler pro-slavery men gave it little heed except as an academic altruism. But they saw at once that this third proposition dangerously menaced the whole slave system, the oldest American institution and the one they

prized above all other things American. And so no protestation, however vehement, that slavery in the existing States would not be molested, could give them a feeling of security. For the right to regulate slavery in the territories carried with it the right to regulate all future States, and the right to regulate the thing out of existence. It is not strange then that most of the maneuvers of the opposing parties from that day to the final appeal to arms was spent on this proposition.

The mighty speech of Lincoln, twenty-three years later at Cooper Union in New York, was but an exhaustive elaboration of this power under the Constitution to regulate slavery in the District of Columbia, to which went the natural sequence of regulating it in other territories. That speech did much to make him President.

The institution of chattel slavery which had called forth these resolutions from the South and the North, was in fact the earliest distinctively American institution. Notoriously brutal, monstrosly cruel, it had a stability which only long years could give to a thing so obviously violative of every principle of morals, and abortive according to every system of economics. An institution possessing such basic weakness might seem to offer but feeble resistance to any determined opposition, but two hundred years of existence will give a sanctity to wrong and error almost as surely as to right and truth. Chattel slavery had been established more than one hundred and fifty years before the Constitution, and it was not without some basis of reason that most southerners and not a few persons elsewhere believed this older American institution likely to survive that later one which we know as the Constitution of the United States.

There was another factor, too, more tangible and doubtless, to the superficial, appearing even more powerful than this element of time, which tended to the perpetuation of chattel slavery. This was the support of the dominant class, made up of slaveholders, small but powerful beyond all proportion to its numbers. More and more the wealth and prestige of families in the South had come to be fixed in terms of slaves. And more and more all other forms of wealth in these States tended to become negligible. For more than twenty years prior to the Civil War it is likely that the dominant class of large slaveholders had constituted less than one-tenth of the white population. While here and there would be found a small farmer with one or two slaves, there was substantially no great middle class composed of artisans, mechanics, shopkeepers and the like. The southern scheme of government increasingly contemplated only the large slaveholders and their black slaves. The other and largest part of the white population, wretchedly poor because shut out from all the avenues for acquiring wealth, and becoming poorer; and densely ignorant, because of the utter lack of schools wherein to acquire learning, fitted less and less into the system foisted upon them by the dominant group. In this system there were no high points, no substantial merits.

Everywhere, there was one vast level of exploitation, both of blacks and whites, differing only as to degree. Perhaps the whole situation will be clearer if it be pointed out that in this southern land there were two gigantic systems of slavery: one was a chattel slavery for the 4,000,000 blacks, the other a political and economic slavery for nearly the same number of whites. Nowhere in all the

civilized world of that day or perhaps in any day, has so small a proportion of a population exercised such overwhelming power in a far spread government based on the mechanics of democracy; and nowhere has such power been so unconscionably abused. Under the forms of a republic and amid a general cant about democracy, the most oppressive oligarchy of modern times had been established.

After two hundred years, voices of protest began to be heard on behalf of the blacks of this double slave system. In time they found their tribunes, and the Gracchi at Rome two thousand years earlier fought no braver fight than these. They, too, had their martyrs. Daily the civilized world was told what crimes were being done in this American land, while the perpetrators prated loudly of freedom. A strange and monstrous freedom was this, the freedom to enslave their fellow men. But for this class of submerged whites, no voice was lifted up. The masses of the North knew not of its existence. This people was never pointed out to the travelers from the outer world. Its voice was stifled as completely as that of the black slaves. It had no part in the halls of justice, and it was too illiterate to build up a literature of protest. Among the ruling class there was none sufficiently humane and touched with the fire of genius to make the world hear of its terrible wrongs, as has happened from time to time for the alleviation of the wretched of Europe, and as happened for the suffering blacks of their own land. All that passed to the outer world concerning them was couched in the terms of hate and contempt that animated the ruling class, which hated them in proportion as it wronged them.

Left to itself, its welfare of no interest to the ruling group, this class sank to lower and lower levels of debasement. With no clear realization of the cause of their constantly increasing ills, they yet hated the ruling group only less than they hated the blacks. The reason for this latter hate is not so readily discovered. Perhaps, as Lord Bryce has suggested, bereft of all the usual sources that give men pride, they were the more proud of the color of their skin. And perhaps the black slaves, noting their wretchedness and aping the masters, made an open display of something like contempt for these "poor whites," which was returned many fold by a class that probably found little in life save the things to be hated.

Meanwhile, the common oppressors of both blacks and whites, answering the many charges being launched by northern abolitionists, assiduously pictured to the outer world the felicity and contentment which they claimed to be the general lot of the folk of their region, whether free white, or slave black. Occasionally their bolder orators went further and strove to prove, even, that the lot of their black slaves was easier than that of the white common laborers of the North and other lands. Several of the southern senators appeared before northern audiences with the somewhat startling argument that chattel slavery was both economically and morally superior as a system to free labor. Senator Robert Toombs, of Georgia, told an audience in Boston that "the fourteen States of the South held ten millions of inhabitants, rich, powerful, educated, refined, prosperous and happy." There was no limit to the mendacity of the slave-holding oligarchy.

Occasionally a visitor from the North or other lands, lavishly dined and entertained, went forth proclaiming

the generosity of his hosts and the lavishness of southern hospitality—and some, even of the happy slaves, they whose unrequited toil enabled others to play the part of the generous and hospitable.

Few made mention of the two-thirds of the white population, poor, ignorant, miserable and wretched beyond all possible pretense on the part of the ruling class. There is another southerner at this time who, less optimistic than Toombs, bitterly mentions this group as “miserable nondescript combers of the soil, scratching the land here and there for subsistence, living from hand to mouth, or trespassing along the borders of the possessions of the large proprietors.” Oddly enough, he was yet an earnest exponent of the slave system, and his remedy for the baleful condition he had mentioned was the restoration of the slave trade with Africa thus giving the South cheaper and more slaves. Southern statesmanship, by some thought to be superior, was never at a lower ebb.

Seldom, however, did any word pass to the outer world concerning this submerged class of whites, and then, couched only in the terms of hate and contempt that animated the ruling class. This hatred has passed through all the intervening years down to our own day to mislead some, otherwise highly endowed. The late Albert J. Beveridge has adopted and helped to perpetuate this libel of the oppressor against the oppressed, and has discovered nothing in the poverty and wretchedness of these people save their own incapacity. After describing the felicity of the dominant class he goes on to tell of the “lowest strata, made up of white people steeped in poverty, as a class, shiftless, unmoral, without social standing, and devoid of a wish for advancement * * * their most notice-

able characteristic was indolence * * * not attached to the soil and at intervals moving from place to place without apparent reason." Verily, the terrible hatred of the slaveholder has come down to the third and fourth generation in slander against those whom it had irremediably wronged.

Lord Bryce, more profound and experienced in statecraft, discloses not only the symptoms, the effects, but the underlying causes as well. "The second order consists of those who used to be called the Mean Whites. Their condition strengthens the impression of half civilization which the rural districts of the South produce upon the traveler. * * * While slavery lasted, these whites were, in the planting States, a wholly wretched, because economically superfluous class. There was no room while the system of large slave-worked properties made the cultivation of small farms hopeless, and the existence of a thriving free peasantry impossible. The planters disliked these whites and kept them off their estates as much as possible; the slaves despised them, and called them 'poor white trash.' In South Carolina and the Gulf States, they picked up a wretched livelihood by raising some vegetables near their huts, and killing the wild creatures of the woods, while a few hung around the great houses to look out for a stray job. Shiftless, ignorant, improvident, with no aims in the present nor hopes for the future, citizens in nothing but the possession of votes, they were a standing reproach to the system that produced them, and the most convincing proof of its economic as well as moral failure."

Shall we wonder, then, that when at a later day the responsibilities of government finally fall into such un-

trained hands, the result is failure? Are we surprised that minds accustomed for generations to being the butt of every abuse and mistreatment that the insolence and contempt of an inconsiderate and incompetent ruling class could devise, should at such a day fail readily to grasp the ends and subtleties of statesmanship? Could minds, habituated in the past only to hatred, envy and like futilities, possess a proper discernment of the equities and humanities that must have a large place in any efficient and durable government?

CHAPTER TWELVE

AN EVENTFUL session was this which came to an end March 6, 1837. With the exception of a brief special session in July, it brought to an end the term for which Lincoln had been elected. There is reason to believe that he found the Legislature a congenial place, and as one of the outstanding leaders of the body he probably derived added satisfaction from an office already highly satisfactory. Certainly it was but a short time before he was again campaigning for reelection.

The extra session of the Legislature had been called by the Governor to devise some remedy for the stringent financial situation that threatened to become a nationwide disaster, and inevitably to engulf many Illinois banks in the general ruin. Already the Bank of the United States, and New York and Philadelphia banks, had stopped specie payments. This was the same Legislature which in its enthusiasm for internal improvements had at an early session saddled the State with an enormous bonded indebtedness. It is hardly surprising that it produced nothing in the way of a remedy; rather, it proceeded to enlarge on some of its earlier schemes and thereby aggravated the situation.

Lincoln was one of the members of the financial com-

mittee of the Legislature, and appears to have aspired to a place in history similar to that of DeWitt Clinton of New York. Subsequent events made it clear that it was easier to formulate plans for internal improvements than to find the money for their payment. The final result was the collapse of the scheme, and however famous Lincoln was afterwards to become, his fame had in it nothing that suggests the man who did so much to make the Erie Canal a reality.

Whether the failure of these ambitious projects was due to inherent weaknesses in the plans thus devised by Lincoln and his associates in the Legislature, or whether it came from the nation-wide financial panic that swept the land at this time, it is not easy to say; but it is certain that the tax burdened citizens of the State placed the blame on the legislators who had put through the scheme, and for many years this was an important question in recurring political campaigns.

In the month of March of this year of 1837, the name of Abraham Lincoln was added to the list of those who were members of the legal profession of his state. Very soon thereafter he took his departure, doubtless with pangs of regret, from the little village of which he had been an important part during all the years of his early manhood. Here at New Salem he had been received kindly. Here he had been given the most loyal godspeed on the long journey to a goal more glorious than either he or any of the friendly and admiring villagers ever dreamed of. He now went to the more populous town of Springfield, newly selected capital of the State, and largely by his efforts. It held at the time near two thousand pop-

ulation, and was the county seat of Sangamon with a population of close to 20,000, being one of the most populous counties of the State.

John T. Stuart, whom Lincoln had known since the Black Hawk War, and who had befriended him from time to time, was one of the best known lawyers of the place. He had advised and loaned Lincoln books in the course of his studies, and now took him in as a partner.

Lincoln's entry into Springfield on a borrowed horse, with less than ten dollars in his pockets and more than one thousand dollars in debt, was far from auspicious. Joshua Speed, for the rest of his life one of his most intimate friends, thus tells the story of that occasion and their first meeting. "He came into my store, set his saddle bags on the counter, and inquired what the furniture for a single bedstead would cost. I took slate and pencil, made a calculation, and found that the sum for furniture complete would amount to seventeen dollars in all. Said he: 'It is probably cheap enough but I want to say that, cheap as it is, I have not the money to buy. But if you will credit me until Xmas, and my experiment here as a lawyer is a success, I will pay you then. If I fail in that I will probably never pay you at all.' The tone of his voice was so melancholy that I felt for him. I looked up at him and thought then, as I think now, that I never saw so gloomy and melancholy a face in my life. I said to him, 'So small a debt seems to affect you so deeply, I think I can suggest a plan by which you will be able to attain your end without incurring any debt. I have a very large room and a very large double bed in it, which you are perfectly welcome to share with me if you choose.'

'Where is your room?' he asked. 'Upstairs,' said I, pointing to the stairs leading from the store to my room. Without saying a word he took his saddle bag on his arm, went up stairs, set them on the floor, came down again, and with a face beaming with pleasure and smiles, exclaimed: 'Well, Speed, I'm moved.'"

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THE diligent and unremitting research of Herndon has enabled the world to see Lincoln in another affair of the heart. Fortunately it has none of the tragic elements that characterized the story of Ann Rutledge. Where that episode touched the very depths of despair this reached the height of the ridiculous. This resulted by reason of Lincoln's inability to gauge the workings of a woman's mind. In fact there is reason to believe that if there have been a few men who have been more profoundly capable in judging the mental processes of men, there have likewise been few men who have been more profoundly incapable in judging the mental processes of women. Men generally avoid what they feel they do not understand. Lincoln, when a clerk, evaded as far as able serving the women patrons of the store. He doubtless had a friendly feeling for them, but he also had a feeling of awe and discomfort when in their presence.

He had met Miss Mary Owens while she was on a visit to her sister, Mrs. Abel, and appears to have very quickly become interested in the young woman, whom report makes highly attractive both physically and mentally. It is obvious, however, from a certain self-restraint and lack of the ardour that characterizes the letters writ-

ten to the young lady, that Lincoln was not sufficiently convinced of his own warmth of feeling to induce any such emotion in one not already strongly disposed in his favor. Two of three letters, written to her are interesting in displaying the uncertain mood of the young man who argues rationally, but with an entire absence of the fervor usually considered more convincing to the female mind, that he desires her affections and would have her for wife; and at the same time sets forth a further argument that it would be a serious error for her to accept his marriage proposition, and at no time expresses his love in terms definite and positive. Total failure to understand the subject matter. But while young Lincoln convinces himself that his logic has stormed the seat of the young woman's affections, she, herself, is calmly rationalizing the Lincoln mood and his general attitude toward women, and decides, as she later announced, that "Mr. Lincoln was deficient in those little links which make up the chain of woman's happiness." Microscopically clear was her view of the subject matter.

This second failure in love, if so it be, is followed by no profound melancholy; there is no occasion for the solicitude of friends. The only reaction is a letter, this time to another woman, narrating the history of this love episode, so frank and boisterously humorous that it has been a bit shocking to some of the more gallant biographers.

One letter to Mary Owens, written from Springfield, May 7, 1837, reads:

"Friend Mary:

"I have commenced two letters to send you before this, both of which displeased me before I got half done, and

so I tore them up. The first I wasn't serious enough, and the second was on the other extreme. I shall send this, turn out as it may.

"This thing of living in Springfield is rather a dull business after all—at least it is so to me. I am quite as lonesome here as (I) ever was anywhere in my life. I have been spoken to by but one woman since I've been here, and should not have been by her if she could have avoided it. I've never been to church yet, and probably shall not be soon. I stay away because I am conscious I should not know how to behave myself. I am often thinking of what we said of your coming to live at Springfield. I am afraid you would not be satisfied. There is a great deal of flourishing about in carriages here, which it would be your doom to see without sharing in it. You would have to be poor without the means of hiding your poverty. Do you believe you could bear that patiently? Whatever woman may cast her lot with mine, should anyone ever do so, it is my intention to do all in my power to make her happy and contented, and there is nothing I can imagine that would make me more unhappy than to fail in the effort. I know I should be much happier with you than the way I am, provided I saw no signs of discontent in you.

"What you have said to me may have been in jest or I may have misunderstood it. If so, then let it be forgotten; if otherwise I much wish you would think seriously before you decide. For my part I have already decided. What I have said I will most positively abide by, provided you wish it. My opinion is you had better not do it. You have not been accustomed to hardship, and it may be more severe than you imagine. I know you are

capable of thinking correctly on any subject; and if you deliberate maturely upon this before you decide then I am willing to abide your decision.

"You must write me a good long letter after you get this. You have nothing else to do, and though it might not seem interesting to you after you have written it, it would be a good deal of company in this busy wilderness. Tell your sister I don't want to hear any more about selling out and moving. That gives me the hypo whenever I think of it.

"Yours, Etc.

"LINCOLN."

This was followed by another letter, August 16, 1837.

"Friend Mary:

"You will no doubt think it rather strange that I should write you a letter on the same day on which we parted; and I can only account for it by supposing that seeing you lately makes me think of you more than usual, while at our late meeting we had but few expressions of thought. You must know that I cannot see you or think of you with entire indifference; and yet it may be that you are mistaken in regard to what my real feelings towards you are. If I knew you were not, I should not trouble you with this letter. Perhaps any other man would know enough without further information, but I consider it my peculiar right to plead ignorance and your bounden duty to allow the plea.

"I want in all cases to do right; and most particularly so in all cases with women. I want, at this particular time, more than anything else, to do right with you, and

if I knew it would be doing right, as I rather suspect it would, to let you alone, I would do it. And for the purpose of making the matter as plain as possible, I now say, that you can now drop the subject, dismiss your thoughts (if you ever had any) from me forever, and leave this letter unanswered, without calling forth one accusing murmur from me. And I will even go farther, and say, that if it will add anything to your comfort or peace of mind to do so, it is my sincere wish that you should. Do not understand by this that I wish to cut your acquaintance. I mean no such thing. What I do wish is that our further acquaintance shall depend upon yourself. If such further acquaintance would contribute nothing to your happiness, I am sure it would not to mine. If you feel yourself in any degree bound to me, I am now willing to release you, provided you wish it; while, on the other hand, I am willing and even anxious to bind you faster if I can be convinced that it will in any considerable degree add to your happiness. This, indeed, is the whole question with me. Nothing would make me more miserable, nothing more happy, than to know you were so.

"If it suits you best to not answer this—farewell—a long life and a merry one attend you. But if you conclude to write back, speak as plainly as I do. There can be neither harm nor danger in saying to me anything you think, just in the manner you think it.

"My respects to your sister.

"Your friend,

"LINCOLN."

A third letter to Mrs. O. H. Browning gives the history of his failure.

"Springfield, April 1, 1838.

"Dear Madam:

"Without apologizing for being egotistical, I shall make the history of so much of my life as has elapsed since I saw you, the subject of this letter. And, by the way, I now discover that, in order to give an intelligible account of the things I have done and suffered since I saw you, I shall necessarily have to relate some that happened before.

"It was, then, in the autumn of 1836 that a married lady of my acquaintance and who was a great friend of mine, being about to pay a visit to her father and other relatives residing in Kentucky, proposed to me that on her return she would bring a sister of hers with her on condition that I would engage to become her brother-in-law with all convenient despatch. I, of course, accepted the proposal, for you know I could not have done otherwise, had I really been averse to it; but privately, between you and me I was most confoundedly well pleased with the project. I had seen the said sister some three years before, thought her intelligent and agreeable, and saw no good objection in plodding life through hand in hand with her. Time passed on, the lady took her journey, and in due time returned, sister in company sure enough. This astonished me a little; for it appeared to me that her coming so readily showed that she was a trifle too willing; but, on reflection, it occurred to me that she might have been prevailed on by her married sister to come, without anything concerning me ever having been mentioned to her; and so I concluded that, if no other objection presented itself, I would consent to waive this. All this occurred to me on hearing of her arrival in the neighborhood; for, be it remembered, I had not

yet seen her, except about three years previous, as above mentioned. In a few days we had an interview; and, although I had seen her before, she did not look as my imagination had pictured her. I knew she was oversized, but she now appeared a fair match for Falstaff. I knew she was called an 'old maid,' and I felt no doubt of the truth of at least half of the appellation; but now, when I beheld her, I could not for my life avoid thinking of my mother; and this, not from withered features, for her skin was too full of fat to permit of its contracting into wrinkles, but from her want of teeth, weather-beaten appearance in general, and from a kind of notion that ran in my head that nothing could have commenced at the size of infancy and reached her present bulk in less than thirty-five or forty years; and, in short, I was not at all pleased with her. But what could I do? I had told her sister I would take her for better or for worse; and I made a point of honor and conscience in all things to stick to my word, especially if others had been induced to act on it, which in this case I had no doubt they had; for I was now fairly convinced that no other man on earth would have her, and hence the conclusion that they were bent on holding me to my bargain. 'Well,' thought I, 'I have said it, and, be the consequences what they may, it shall not be my fault if I fail to do it.' At once I determined to consider her my wife; and this done, all my powers of discovery were put to work in search of perfections in her which might be fairly set off against her defects. I tried to imagine her handsome, which, but for her unfortunate corpulency, was actually true. Exclusive of this, no woman that I have ever seen had a finer face. I also tried to convince myself that the mind was much more to be

valued than the person; and in this she was not inferior, as I could discover, to any with whom I had been acquainted.

“Shortly after this, without coming to any positive understanding with her, I set out for Vandalia, when and where you first saw me. During my stay there I had letters from her which did not change my opinion of either her intellect or intention, but on the contrary confirmed it in both.

“All this while, although I was fixed, ‘firm as the surge-repelling rock,’ in my resolution, I found I was continually repenting the rashness which had led me to make it. Through life, I have been in no bondage, either real or imaginary, from the thralldom of which I so much desired to be free. After my return home, I saw nothing to change my opinions of her in any particular. She was the same, and so was I. I now spent my time in planning how I might get along through life after my contemplated change of circumstances should have taken place, and how I might procrastinate the evil day for a time, which I really dreaded as much, perhaps more, than an Irishman does the halter.

“After all my suffering upon this deeply interesting subject, here I am, wholly, unexpectedly, completely, out of the ‘scrape’; and now I want to know if you can guess how I got out of it—out, clear, in every sense of the term; no violation of word, honor, or conscience. I don’t believe you can guess, and so I might as well tell you at once. As the lawyer says, it was done in the manner following, to-wit: After I had delayed the matter as long as I thought I could in honor do (which, by the way, had brought me round into the last fall), I concluded I might

as well bring it to a consummation without further delay; and so I mustered my resolution, and made the proposal to her direct; but, shocking to relate, she answered No. At first I supposed she did it through an affectation of modesty, which I thought but ill became her under the peculiar circumstances of her case; but on my renewal of the charge, I found she repelled it with greater firmness than before. I tried it again and again, but with the same success, or rather with the same want of success.

"I finally was forced to give it up; at which I very unexpectedly found myself mortified almost beyond endurance. I was mortified, it seemed to me, in a hundred different ways. My vanity was deeply wounded by the reflection that I had been too stupid to discover her intentions, and at the same time never doubting that I understood them perfectly; and also that she, whom I had taught myself to believe nobody else would have, had actually rejected me with all my fancied greatness. And to cap the whole, I then for the first time began to suspect that I was really a little in love with her. But let it all go. I'll try and outlive it. Others have been made fools of by the girls; but this can never with truth be said of me. I most emphatically, in this instance, made a fool of myself. I have now come to the conclusion never again to think of marrying, and for this reason: I can never be satisfied with any one who would be block-head enough to have me.

"When you receive this, write me a long yarn about something to amuse me. Give my respects to Mr. Brown-
ing.

"Your sincere friend,

"A. LINCOLN."

Taken together these three letters present an extraordinarily vivid view of the character of this strange man. There is a close intermingling of the serious and the comic, with facets here and there reflecting the most delicate shades of consideration for the feelings of others; while others, surcharged with the sense of the humorous, light up shades and reserves that custom has considered inviolable. Above all there is a frankness and blunt honesty that would not often be found in such matters.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

IN St. Louis in the year 1836, there was a mob. This mob killed a colored man. Why seek the reason for the deed? There is little reason in things done by mobs. Possibly this man was a murderer; anyway, he had been so called. The deed of this particular mob is recalled, not that it had in itself any features very different from mobs before or since that day, but because by certain intertwinings of men and circumstances it had something to do with making a great man what he was, and in so doing exerted an influence on the subsequent history of the nation that was his and theirs, and which the members of this mob had disgraced.

At this time in St. Louis there was a newspaper known as the *Observer*. The editor was Elijah P. Lovejoy, an ordained minister. No ordinary minister was this man, satisfied to found a system of morals and fix a basis of righteousness for his fellows in discussion, sometimes stereotyped and sometimes abstruse, of the reported acts and sayings of Jewish people who existed from nineteen hundred to five thousand years ago. No, this preacher chose to discuss the things said and done by the men of his own day. And so it came to pass that he began to talk and write more and more of the wrongs of chattel

slavery. At first his discussion of the matter was so moderate in its suggestions that no one was warranted in considering him as an Abolitionist. In the main he thought that colonization would tend to remedy the thing, and that soon or late some method of gradual emancipation could be devised to end it. To which, George Washington, himself, or Thomas Jefferson, or any of the galaxy of Virginians or other southern great men, as well as the men of the North, might readily have assented. But the sons of such fathers had followed after other lights, and no longer was it safe to proclaim in the nation these fathers had "brought forth on this continent" that which these fathers, themselves, had proclaimed. And so it came to pass that shortly after the killing of the man by the mob in St. Louis, the office and printing press of the *Observer* was wrecked, because the editor had dared to make unfavorable mention of the mob and its actions as follows: "In Charlestown it burns convents over the head of defenceless women; in Baltimore, it desecrates the Sabbath; in Vicksburg it hangs up gamblers, three or four in a row; and in St. Louis, it forces a man, a hardened wretch certainly, and one that deserved to die,—it forces him from beneath the aegis of our constitution and laws, and hurries him to the stake and burns him alive."

Later, Lovejoy moved his press and fixtures to the town of Alton, some twenty miles north of St. Louis, on the eastern side of the Mississippi river, in Illinois. There, in a northern State he might well suppose that he was free to discuss the institution of slavery according to his own convictions. But this was not to be. The repressive hands of the slave holders did not stop at the border line between North and South, and his printing press was

hurled down the precipitous cliffs on which the town is built into the waters of the river below. Consultations followed and an apparent compromise was entered into, and the paper resumed business as the *Alton Observer*. Despite the former warnings and continuous threats against his life, Lovejoy, the preacher, could not or would not restrict the discussions of his paper to the reported sayings of Jewish people, twenty or fifty centuries dead, but continued to discuss the men of his own day, their sayings and their deeds.

In St. Louis, in the allotted course of time, a grand jury was summoned and had laid before it all the facts connected with the burning to death of a colored man by a mob some months earlier. And the editor of the *Alton Observer* still convinced that it was his duty to discuss the men of his day and their deeds, made mention of this grand jury, and particularly of the strange instruction given it by the presiding judge, whose name was Lawless. In this instruction Judge Lawless said, among other things: "If on the other hand the destruction of the murderer of Hammond, was the act, as I have said, of the many,—of the multitude, in the ordinary sense of these words—not the act of numerable and ascertainable malefactors, but of congregated thousands, seized upon and impelled by that mysterious, metaphysical, and almost electric frenzy, which in all ages and nations, has hurried on the infuriated multitude, to deeds of death and destruction, then I say, act not at all in the matter; the case then transcends your jurisdiction—it is beyond the reach of human law."

It need hardly be said, that under such an instruction no indictments were returned against any members of

the mob. But there was soon after another wrecking of the printing place of the *Alton Observer* by a mob that had good reason to believe from the instruction mentioned, that what they could not legally do as individuals, they might do with impunity as a mob. Another press was installed and the paper continued its fight for humanity to the last. And then, on November 7, 1837, another mob assembled—the monstrous things breed fast under such law as given by Judge Lawless—and it shot to death Lovejoy, gentle, humane, unselfish, and to the last, brave and determined.

Lovejoy was dead, but the spirit that had urged him on despite the menace of desperate enemies, was not dead and would not die. Doubtless he left none braver among the living to carry on the struggle against the mounting power of the slaveholders of the South, bent on removing the barriers that confined slavery to that section. There were others, however, ready to go forward in the path he had trod, some with all his fervor and recklessness of danger, and others having in mind the dangers that beset the situation. In Illinois where he had paid the full measure of devotion, there was one of these, a young man, devoid of any violence of spirit, in no sense one of the militants called abolitionists; and yet, already, in the depth of his comprehension of the evils of the slave system and in the amplitude of the plans he had even then begun to formulate for the struggle ahead, this young man was weighing heavily in the contest that was to put his State in the vanguard of the friends of freedom, and ultimately was to exert the force of many Lovejoys. The influence of Elijah P. Lovejoy over young Lincoln is easily shown

in one of the seemingly insignificant happenings that was a part of the life of Springfield at this time.

Lincoln had soon acquired a definite place in the town, and in so far as his very limited means would permit had considerable weight. The larger part of the town population was of southern origin, many of these from Kentucky and Tennessee. Many of these families desired to carry on the traditions of the aristocracy of the South, and some had the means to sustain such traditions. To these, Lincoln, the "poor white," must have appeared a questionable figure. Possibly, back in the old home State they would have rudely repulsed any advance he might have made. Certain it was, however, that here in Illinois he was soon a recognized leader among the young men of the town. There was a literary and debating club in which he was one of the leading spirits. It held its meetings at any office that was conveniently offered, or at Joshua Speed's room. There was also The Young Men's Lyceum, "a body which contained and commanded the culture and talent of the place." Its meetings were public and reflected great credit on the community. It attests the increasing ability of Lincoln that here, too, he was soon one of the most noted figures.

Before this body on January 27, 1837, several months after the mob already noticed, and while Lovejoy was still giving his editorial condemnation of it, Lincoln delivered an address that is highly significant in a number of respects. This address was delivered some weeks before he and Dan Stone had presented their resolutions to the Legislature, declaring "slavery to be founded on both injustice and bad policy." The ideas advanced therein appear to have come either from direct contemplation of

certain mob atrocities then widely prevalent over the country, or from a close following of the arguments of Lovejoy, or probably both.

His reflective mind, with its tendency to delve to the ultimate of things, saw in these mob outbreaks a matter more serious than mere sporadic violations of rights of person and property, however serious these things necessarily were. In its style, and in the occasional extravagance of statement, it is a far call between this address of the youthful Lincoln and that of the addresses of the mature man. But in its earnest seriousness and tracing to their last results, the evils pointed out, it was a noteworthy effort and one which heightened the respect which he had already secured from his fellows in his new home. If we consider the substance of this address and add to it the resolutions already mentioned, but which were not presented until several weeks after the delivery of the address, it may be seen from a study of the after life of the man, that they constituted a kind of declaration of principles, articles of faith, and constitution, by which his future course of action was guided. For this reason and that it may give a clearer idea of the changes that later developed in his oratorical style, the address in larger part is here presented.

It was entitled "The Perpetuation of Our Political Institutions," and proceeds as follows:

"In the great journal of things happening under the sun, we, the American people find our account running under date of the nineteenth century of the Christian era. We find ourselves in the peaceful possession of the fairest portion of the earth as regards extent of territory, fertility of soil and salubrity of climate. We find ourselves under

the government of a system of political institutions conducting more essentially to the ends of civil and religious liberty than any of which the history of former times tells us. We, when mounting the stage of existence found ourselves the legal inheritors of these fundamental blessings. We toiled not in the acquirement of them; they are a legacy bequeathed us by a once hardy, brave and patriotic, but now lamented and departed race of ancestors. Theirs was the task (and nobly they performed it) to possess themselves, and through themselves us, of this goodly land, and to uprear on its hills and its valleys a political edifice of liberty and equal rights. 'Tis ours only, to transmit these—the former unprofaned by the foot of an invader, the latter undecayed by the lapse of time and untorn by usurpation—to the latest generation that fate shall permit the world to know. This task of gratitude to our fathers, justice to ourselves and duty to our posterity, and love to our species in general, all imperatively require us faithfully to perform.

“How shall we perform it? At what point shall we expect the approach of danger? By what means shall we fortify against it? Shall we expect some transatlantic military giant to step the ocean and crush us at a blow? Never! All the armies of Europe, Asia and Africa, combined, with all the treasure of the earth (our own excepted) in their military chest, with a Bonaparte for a commander, could not by force take a drink from the Ohio or make a track on the Blue Ridge in a trial of a thousand years. At what point then is the approach of danger to be expected? I answer, if it is ever to reach us it must spring up amongst us; it cannot come from abroad. If destruction be our lot we must ourselves be

its author and finisher. As a nation of freemen we must live through all time or die by suicide."

Speaking then of mob outrages, he said: "It will be tedious as well as useless to recount the horrors of all of them. Those happening in the State of Mississippi and at St. Louis are perhaps the most dangerous in example and revolting to humanity. In the Mississippi case, they first commenced by hanging the regular gamblers—a set of men certainly not following for a livelihood a very useful or honest occupation, but one which, so far from being forbidden by the laws, was actually licensed by an act of the Legislature passed but a single year before. Next, Negroes suspected of conspiring to raise an insurrection were caught up and hanged in all parts of the State; then, white men supposed to be leagued with the Negroes; and finally, strangers from neighboring states, going thither on business, were in many instances subjected to the same fate. Thus went on this process of hanging, from gamblers to Negroes, from Negroes to white citizens; and from these to strangers, till dead men were seen literally dangling from the boughs of trees upon every roadside, and in numbers that were almost sufficient to rival the native Spanish moss of the country as a drapery of the forest.

"When men take it into their heads today to hang gamblers or burn murderers, they should recollect that in the confusion usually attending such transactions they will be as likely to hang or burn some one who is neither a gambler nor a murderer as one who is, and that, acting upon the example they set, the mob of tomorrow may, and probably will, hang or burn, some of them by the very same mistake. And not only so, the innocent, those

who have ever set their faces against violations of law in every shape, alike with the guilty fall victims to the ravages of the mob law; and thus it goes on, step by step, till all the walls erected for the defense of the persons and property of individuals are trodden down and disregarded.

"Turn then to the horror striking scene at St. Louis, a single victim only, was sacrificed there. This story is very short, and is the most highly tragic of anything in its length that has ever been witnessed in real life. A mulatto man by the name of McIntosh was seized in the street, dragged to the suburbs of the city, chained to a tree, and actually burned to death; and all within a single hour from the time he had been a freeman attending to his own business and at peace with the world. Such are the effects of mob law, and such are the scenes becoming more and more frequent in this land, so lately famed for its love of law and order, and the stories of which have now grown too familiar to attract anything more than an idle remark.

"Thus, then, by the operation of this mobocratic spirit which all must admit is now abroad in the land, the strongest bulwark of any government, and particularly of those constituted like ours, may be effectually broken down and destroyed—I mean, the attachment of the people. Whenever this effect shall be produced amongst us; whenever the vicious portion of the population shall be permitted to gather in bands of hundreds and thousands, and burn churches and ravage and rob provision-stores, throw printing presses into rivers, shoot editors and hang and burn obnoxious persons at pleasure and with impunity, depend upon it this government cannot last."

Surely, a noticeable speech is this for a young man, or any man; and in its fulness of grasp of the dangers foreseen, one that might have done credit to one long experienced in statecraft. It is not difficult to see in several parts of the address that the things that moved the soul of Elijah P. Lovejoy, had likewise touched the soul of Abraham Lincoln.

The campaign of 1838 went through to a successful end and Lincoln continued to be, and with an added weight, among the important men of this Legislature. This is attested to some extent by the fact that the Whig party put him forward as their candidate for Speaker of the body. He received the party strength of thirty-eight votes, but the Democratic was still the majority party and elected William L. D. Ewing with a vote of forty-three. Lincoln was again a member of the finance committee. He was also a member of the committee on counties.

It was now becoming obvious to all that the noble vision of a network of railroads and waterways, which the enthusiasm of the preceding Legislature had conjured up, was like some rare mirage fading into nothingness at the very point where realization was promised. Many years were yet to pass before the far corners of the State were to be joined in easy and advantageous commerce. The bonds voted with such confident assurance found no purchasers, and with no money forthcoming to pay for the various improvements the enthusiasm that had urged everybody on soon began to wane and in a short time the project became little more than an unpleasant memory, which rarely came up for discussion except for the purpose

of attempting to fix the blame. As, however, the great majority of the members had been in favor of the legislation, the blame was so generally distributed as to prevent it hurting anyone.

Lincoln appears to have taken his share with no attempt at evading the responsibility and is said to have remarked that "he guessed he was no financier." His reelection was welcomed as a kind of vindication from any charge of wrong doing. But it came as the result of a harder fought campaign than either of the others.

His partner, John T. Stuart, was elected to Congress at the same time. Stephen A. Douglas was his opponent in a campaign that was waged with such bitterness that the candidates came to blows at one time. Large was the belligerency, if small the proportions and few the inches of this young man Douglas who is so long to stand athwart the pathway of Lincoln. Audacity, he has; decision, he has; persistence he has. His is a genius that matures early. Though four years younger than Lincoln, his daring will carry him to the heights earlier. Nor will the defeat sustained in this campaign long retard him. More and more often he and Lincoln fire verbal broadsides at each other. Seldom has an opponent done so much to develop an opponent as Douglas unwittingly did for Lincoln.

Physically, few men differed more. Abraham Lincoln stood above most of the tall men around him; Stephen A. Douglas stood below most of the short men around him. And it is probable that they differed as much in manners, methods and temperament, and in all things mental as they did physically. Warm of impulse, and very fa-

miliar was Douglas. Herndon describes him when walking with a friend as inclined to "throw an arm around him," but adds that there was something in Lincoln which forbade this kind of familiarity and he did not indulge in it himself.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

IN THIS thirtieth year the pathway of a third woman deeply paralleled his own. Lincoln was again awake to the feminine influence, and again there were violent mental perturbations. A Mary Todd who had made a visit to Springfield in 1837, had returned in 1839. No ordinary young woman of what was then the back yard of America was she. At that time, in her twenty-first year, Mary Todd appears to have combined in her character an unusual degree of pride and ambition, of energy and decisiveness, even for one descended from a most aristocratic Kentucky family. She had received more than the average training considered requisite for women whose lot had been placed in the upper and easier levels of the social plane. Whatever the schools of that day had to offer in what was demanded for the ranks of the polished and cultured, this young woman possessed. Indeed, in the light of our knowledge of her subsequent life as the wife of Abraham Lincoln, it is easy to believe that not a little of the irritations that fell to her lot and to her distinguished husband, resulted from the tenacity with which she clung to the teachings of her early days in Kentucky, and her utter inability to conceive of any other medium of conduct for those with whom she was allied.

David Hume has left an observation concerning "the curiosity entertained by all civilized nations of inquiring into the exploits and adventures of their ancestors." A similar tendency is discovered in the conduct of individuals and smaller groups, who would deduce from merits or excellencies, either real or fancied, belonging to their ancestors, similar traits in themselves.

Mary Todd, coming within the favored group, has on this account been given an over-conspicuous place as a historic figure. Examined more directly and critically, it would be difficult to allot her any historic place aside from that which has preserved to posterity the names of a number of other persons and places that had some associations with the career of him whose fame has no connection with ancestry worship, and who without such support stands pre-eminently the foremost of America's sons. This man exists forever in the world of men because he reflects credit on his fellows, rather than because they reflect credit on him. How much more exalted is such glory than that found in the reflection of ancestors, and, too, in a land where even the farthest tracing of these must appear without significance compared with the older groupings of Europe, and but as yesterday beside some of the records that might be found among the Chinese.

Fate sometimes exhibits grim bits of humor, and such it must have been that drew Abraham Lincoln toward Mary Todd. Possibly, the so-called law of opposites had something to do with it. Certainly, Lincoln, the "poor white" and, according to the dominant ideas of the day, the uneducated and uncultured, was soon the favored suitor of Mary Todd, the aristocrat, brought up in the

fastidious niceties of the drawing rooms of Europe under the watchful eyes of a French instructress. The man whose serious attitude toward life and whose dark melancholy could not be disguised even by extravagant orgies of humorous story-telling, was following in the train of one whose first thought was the frivols of the fashionable. He was the considerate, the kindly, the tolerant; she was the sarcastic, the stinging, the impatient, and intolerant. The sight of slavery, even of the lowly alien, cut him to the soul; the sight of freedom save among her ease loving companions, aroused in her only regrets for the servile attendance of the slaves of her homeland. He was profound, she was superficial. Even physically the differences continued; he was tall and lank, she was short and stout. Herndon has tersely said: "In her figure and physical proportions, in education, and bearing, temperament, history—in everything, she was the exact reverse of Lincoln."

From the first all save themselves recognized the utter incompatibility, the total lack of harmony in their widely variant temperaments. It appears, too, that Lincoln with his deeper and more exact reasoning powers, after his first enthusiasms over the showy and superficially brilliant young woman, with her ready alertness of mind and sharpness of tongue, saw the dangers ahead. But by that time in her positive and assured manner she had placed him in the position of an accepted suitor.

With this realization becoming clearer, again he planned to break the threatening chains of matrimony, as he had planned three years earlier with Mary Owens. But this young woman knew her own mind even as that other had known hers; and whereas the aims of that other

made his plans ludicrously unnecessary, the aims of this made them entirely futile. Her vanity was fed upon dreams of pomp and place and power. Though scorning his somewhat lower-class manners and despising his lowly kindred, she readily saw that his was a growing popularity and the likelihood that he would go far in the world of men. Besides, there was a certain aloofness, a strangeness about this man. Stephen A. Douglas did the things that men usually do with decidedly more cleverness, but this man did not generally do the things that men usually do. Such qualities go far in sustaining the interest already excited in the young woman's mind, and if the result is not real love it is something so near to it that it may easily pass for the same. And so it was she chose to hold him and, though patrician in all else, it was she who would stoop to continue the alliance to its consummation. She would do this despite the difficulties made by the man himself. One of his greatest biographers, Miss Tarbell, has astutely summed these up in the following lines:

"Careless of forms, indifferent to society, thoughtless and inattentive, he frequently failed to accompany her to the merry-makings which she wanted to attend, and she naturally enough resented his neglect, interpreting it as a purposed slight. Sometimes in revenge she went with Douglas or some other escort who offered. Reproaches and tears and misunderstandings followed. If the lovers made up it was only to fall out again. At last Lincoln become convinced that they were incompatible and resolved that he must break the engagement. But the knowledge that the girl loved him took away his

courage. He felt that he must not draw back and he became profoundly miserable."

How to accomplish this was no easy matter, but he finally bethought himself of breaking relations by means of a letter. Herndon thus tells the outcome of his effort: "One evening Lincoln came into our store and called for his warm friend Speed. Together they walked back to the fireplace, where Lincoln drawing from his pocket a letter, asked Speed to read it. The letter, relates Speed, was addressed to Mary Todd, and in it he made a plain statement of his feelings, telling her that he had thought the matter over calmly and with great deliberation, and now felt that he did not love her sufficiently to warrant her in marrying him. This letter he desired me to deliver. Upon my declining to do so he threatened to entrust it to some other person's hand. I reminded him that the moment he placed the letter in Miss Todd's hand she would have the advantage over him. 'Words are forgotten,' I said, 'misunderstood, unnoticed in private conversation, but once put your words in writing and they stand a living and eternal monument against you.' Thereupon, I threw the unfortunate letter in the fire. 'Now' I continued, 'If you have the courage of manhood, go see Mary Todd yourself; tell her if you do not love her, the facts, and that you will not marry her, be careful not to say too much, and then leave at your earliest opportunity.' Thus admonished, he buttoned his coat and with a rather determined look started out to perform the serious duty for which I had just given him explicit directions. That night Speed did not go upstairs to bed with us, but—under the pretense of wanting to read, remained in the store below. He was waiting for Lin-

coln's return. Ten o'clock passed, and still the interview with Miss Todd had not ended. At length, shortly after eleven, he came stalking in. Speed was satisfied from the length of Lincoln's stay that his directions had not been followed. 'Well, Old Fellow, did you do as I told you and you promised?' were Speed's first words. 'Yes, I did,' responded Lincoln, thoughtfully, 'and when I told Mary that I did not love her, she burst into tears and almost springing from her chair and wringing her hands as if in agony, said something about the deceiver being himself deceived.' Then he stopped. 'What else did you say?' inquired Speed drawing the facts from him. 'To tell you the truth, Speed, it was too much for me, I found the tears trickling down my own cheeks, I caught her in my arms and kissed her.' 'And that's how you broke your engagement,' sneered Speed. 'You not only acted the fool, but your conduct was tantamount to a renewal of the engagement and in decency you cannot back down now.' 'Well,' drawled Lincoln, 'If I'm in again, so be it, it's done and I shall abide by it.'"

It is not difficult to see that Lincoln had made no great advance in knowledge of the other sex since his ludicrous failure to gauge the intentions of Miss Owens three years earlier. He recognized now that the die had been cast, and whatever his apprehensions moved on toward what seemed would be an orthodox ending in matters of the kind. But the end was not yet, and before that end was to be the tongues of the town of Springfield were to wag in awe-struck wonder at the unorthodox conduct of a lowly descended swain who had offended in the last measure a young woman of the aristocracy who delighted in tracing her ancestry back through the centuries, thus

giving indubitable proof of the fact that she was a person of consequence.

Three sisters, each in the upper social levels of Springfield, doubtless saw with trepidation the impending descent of the younger member of the family into the uncertain currents of the commonalty below, and doubtless there was the dread, known only to the woman of fashion at an oncoming social breach. The likelihood is that each offered the wisdom so usual to the mature woman in matters of this kind and advised with all the tact necessary in approaching a young lady, headstrong beyond the average, at the point of her affections. One of these, Mrs. Edwards, wife of Ninian Edwards, one of the most prominent men of Springfield, in a statement made shortly after the death of Lincoln, and perhaps softened by the fulness of the glory that was then his, but tempered by her obvious superior class feeling, has given us her idea of the man and woman in the case. "I have often happened in the room where they were sitting," she relates, "and Mary invariably led the conversation, Mr. Lincoln would sit at her side and listen. He scarcely said a word, but gazed on her as if irresistibly drawn toward her by some superior and unseen power. He could not maintain himself in a continued conversation with a lady reared as Mary was. He was not educated and equipped mentally to make himself either interesting or attractive to ladies. He was a good, honest, and sincere young man whose rugged and manly qualities I admired, but to me he somehow seemed ill-constituted by nature and education to please such a woman as my sister. Mary was quick, gay, and in the social world somewhat brilliant. She loved show and power, and was the most

ambitious woman I ever knew. Although Mr. Lincoln seemed attached to Mary, and fascinated by her wit and sagacity, yet I soon began to doubt whether they could always be so congenial. In a short time I told Mary my impression that they were not suited, or as some persons who believe matches are made in heaven would say, not intended for each other." Here is something of humor, however unintentional. Lincoln, with a background of Blackstone, Lincoln, the lawyer and student of Voltaire and Volney, Gibbons and Paine, Shakespeare and Burns, Lincoln the prominent member of the Legislature, overshadowed in this lady's opinion by her young sister just out of a boarding school.

Perhaps the height of the illogical is arguing the logical in affairs of the heart. Anyway, the companionship of the lady of high social levels and the man of levels farther down in the social plane went on without abatement, regardless of the opinion of the sister with her maturer wisdom. And despite, too, a diversion due to attention paid the young lady by no less a personage than Stephen A. Douglas, younger but wiser than Lincoln in matters feminine. Perhaps, biological impulses decided the issue in favor of the man who was very tall and against the man who was very short, with a lady herself short; at least no better reason is given by those who mention the affair.

From that time the developments as told by Herndon, follow: "The time fixed for the marriage was the first day of January, 1841. Careful preparations for the happy occasion were made at the Edwards mansion. The house underwent the customary renovation; the furniture was properly arranged, the rooms neatly decorated, the sup-

per prepared, and the guests invited. The latter assembled on the evening in question, and awaited in expectant pleasure the interesting ceremony of marriage. The bride bedecked in veil and silken gown, and nervously toying with the flowers in her hair, sat in the adjoining room. Nothing was lacking but the groom. For some strange reason he had been delayed. An hour passed, and the guests as well as the bride became restless. But they were all doomed to disappointment. Another hour passed; messengers were sent out over town, and each returning with the same report, it became apparent that Lincoln, the principal in this little drama, had purposely failed to appear! The bride, in grief, disappeared to her room; the wedding supper was left untouched; the guests quietly and wonderingly withdrew; the lights in the Edwards mansion were blown out, and darkness settled over all for the night. What the feelings of a lady as sensitive, passionate, and proud as Miss Todd were we can only imagine—no one can ever describe them. By daybreak, after persistent search, Lincoln's friends found him. Restless, gloomy, miserable, desperate, he seemed an object of pity. His friends, Speed among the number, fearing a tragic termination, watched him closely in their rooms day and night. "Knives and razors, and every instrument that could be used for self-destruction were removed from his reach." Mrs. Edwards did not hesitate to regard him as insane, and of course her sister Mary shared in that view. But the case was hardly so desperate. His condition began to improve after a few weeks, and a letter written to his partner Stuart, January 23, 1841, three weeks after the scene at Edwards' house, reveals more perfectly how he

felt. He says: "I am now the most miserable man living. If what I feel were equally distributed to the whole human family, there would not be one cheerful face on earth. Whether I shall ever be better, I cannot tell; I awfully forebode I shall not. To remain as I am is impossible. I must die or be better, as it appears to me. . . . I fear I shall be unable to attend to any business here, and a change of scene might help me. If I could be myself I would rather remain at home with Judge Logan. I can write no more."

Notwithstanding the hue and cry raised by those who resent this recital, a close investigation in the light of all the facts now at hand leads to the belief that it contains more truth than can be drawn from any other original source. Whatever exceptions may be urged or errors asserted, practically all his biographers reprint the narrative in full. It may be that it contains some errors of detail; the bride may not have worn a veil, she may not have worn a silk gown, or was not "nervously toying with the flowers in her hair." Certainly the main argument of the narrative is not rebutted by such exceptions. There seems no reason whatever to doubt that on the night when these two were to be married, the prospective bridegroom became panic stricken, overwhelmed probably at the uncertain prospect of future happiness, and at the last moment absented himself from, and utterly ruined what was to have been an event memorable in the social calendar of Springfield, but which became the more memorable because of the failure of the promised ceremony.

Also, it appears that thereafter Lincoln suffered a long period of melancholia, more intense than any since the

death of Ann Rutledge. It may be that there were serious thoughts of suicide, as some of his friends feared. All this is well within the range of the logical, if we remember how terribly serious it was at that time to have heaped so awful a measure of humiliation on a lady of the most exalted station in the social world. Doubtless the wrong was aggravated somewhat, coming as it did at the hands of one whose lot was cast in the outer darkness of the commonalty.

The lady's closet female relatives appear to have promptly agreed that Lincoln was crazy. Only such a contingency could account for such ineptitude, such inability to recognize the advantages of such an alliance. Conclusions of this kind were considerably overdrawn, as has been demonstrated by several methodical investigators. Herndon, too, was certainly in error in saying that Lincoln absented himself from the Legislature then in session. Miss Tarbell, Dr. Barton, and others, make this clear by an examination of the roll call of the session, which shows that the recreant bridegroom was actually present in the Legislature on the second day of January, 1841, the very day after his panicky retreat from the confines of the altar. The third was on Sunday, and though he was not shown present on Monday the fourth, he was there "every legislative day until the thirteenth. He was absent from the thirteenth to the eighteenth." He was present on the nineteenth and absent on the twentieth, "but present again on the twenty-first and every day thereafter until the end of the session, March first." In fact, in both January and the following month Lincoln had better than the average of attendance in the Legislature. It is true that during this period he wrote

many sad letters that indicated the depths of despair, but it is noted that he was able to attend to legislative business. It is shown that on the very day when he composed one of the saddest of these, sent to his law partner, John Stuart, describing himself as mentioned above, as "the most miserable man living," he made a speech to the legislative body.

From his earliest days in New Salem he had met with the friendliest attitude on the part of the villagers, both men and women. Through all his stay in the village he had retained that friendship, thus early gained. He had come to Springfield with the prestige acquired by having been perhaps the most potent figure of the group that swung the Legislature into selecting that town as the capital, and so had the good graces of the townfolk from the beginning. This friendship, too, he had retained and augmented, until now. Then too, Lincoln was a highly social man, and needed and enjoyed friendships probably more than most strong men. For the first time a peculiarly sensitive mind was being made to feel the deep sting of mass hostility, bitter and personal, and the more hurtful, coming as it did from those who were once his friends. Already his soul was heavy with the thought of a cruel wrong done to a woman and so the oppressive weight of the thing struck with a more crushing force. It is not to be wondered, then, that he began to feel that a change of scene might help him.

In view of the rather insistent skepticism which has in some instances sought to question and invalidate the recitals of Herndon, and which is probably due to the average person's demand that a hero always wear his halo, it may be permissible to add a bit of corroborative

testimony. It is taken from one who is bitterly hostile and who aimed to discredit Herndon's account, which was construed as a libel on a kinswoman. Miss Tarbell's industry in bringing out the obscure facts of this incident in the life of Lincoln has called forth a statement from Mrs. B. T. Edwards, who was the wife of Benjamin Edwards, brother of Ninian Edwards, with whom Miss Todd lived and who had married her sister. This lady is approved by Miss Tarbell as of "the most perfect refinement and trustworthiness." Mrs. Edwards proceeds with the vigor of intense dislike to deny and show disapproval of the Herndon statement, but it is readily seen that the denial concerns the more unimportant details rather than the substantial facts of his assertions. She says: "I am impatient to tell you that all he says about this wedding—the time for which was fixed for the first day of January, is a fabrication. He has drawn largely from his imagination in describing something that never took place." Then she adds this definite and highly illuminating statement: "I know the engagement between Mr. Lincoln and Miss Todd was interrupted for a time and it was rumored among her young friends that Mr. Edwards had opposed it. But I am sure there had been no date fixed for any wedding; that is, no preparations had ever been made until the day Mr. Lincoln met Mr. Edwards on the street and told him that he and Mary were going to be married that evening. Upon inquiry Mr. Lincoln said they would be married in the Episcopal Church, to which Mr. Edwards replied, "No; Mary is my ward and must be married at my house." And then the lady proceeds: "If I remember rightly, the wedding guests were few, not more than thirty; and

it seems to me all are gone now but Mrs. Wallace, Mrs. Levering and myself, for it was not much more than a family gathering; only two or three of Miss Todd's young friends were present. The entertainment was simple but in beautiful taste, but the bride had neither veil nor flowers in her hair with which to toy nervously. There had been no elaborate trousseau for the bride of the future President of the United States, nor even a handsome wedding gown; nor was it a gay wedding."

It will be easily discovered that most of this angry protest tends to support rather than refute the statements of Herndon. Remembering the general desire of folk that their kith and kin play heroic rôles, it is in the line of the usual to expect here a note of resentment on the part of those allied to the lady of the drama; and, too, there will be a certain parading of mock gallantry on the part of some for the benefit of those likely to be impressed by it. In addition, the great army of ardent hero-worshippers will demand that the hero of the drama be portrayed only in heroic parts. From such soil has sprung much of the criticism hurled at the devoted Herndon for his revealing narrative, and occasionally a willingness to ascribe it to some flimsy or fantastic motive, such as enmity to the lady or treachery to a friend dead, where there had been only loyalty to him living.

The sequel to the happenings of that evening came on slowly. Some twenty-two months later, James H. Matheney, a very close friend, was accosted by Lincoln. It was the afternoon of the fourth day of November, 1842. "Jim," he said, "I shall have to marry that girl." "Lincoln looked and acted as if he were going to the slaughter," Matheney, his best man, commented. A similar

indication is seen a short time before the wedding, when Speed Butler, son of Lincoln's friend and with whom he roomed, noticing the extra care with which Lincoln was dressing asked with childish curiosity, "where he was going," and received the somewhat startling and laconic answer: "To hell, I suppose."

Plainly, the man was again seized with fear; but either his love, however wavering, or a high sense of fairness had finally brought him to the altar. Abraham Lincoln and Mary Todd were man and wife.

Rev. Charles Dresser, in the gorgeous robes prescribed for such occasions, solemnly recited the impressive Episcopal marriage service. He passed the ring to the groom to place on the bride's finger. The latter proceeded to do this, at the same time repeating after the clergyman the declaration of the ritual: "With this ring I thee endow with all my goods and chattels, lands and tenements." In the intense silence the words carried clear and strong to all parts of the room. Almost immediately there was heard another voice in whispered but excited comment. Justice Thomas C. Brown, of the Supreme Court had served many years in that exalted station but had never before attended such a service. Suddenly recalling that the Illinois law endowed the wife with the goods of her husband and hearing a lawyer repeat the legally needless terms, he had been unable to restrain himself, and so all those present heard his exclamation: "God Almighty! Lincoln, the Statute fixes all that." The sudden injection of this note of the ridiculous where before there had been only profound solemnity came near to disrupting the ceremony. Rev. Dresser, himself, found it difficult to restrain his tendency to laughter.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

IN 1842, with his fourth term in the Legislature coming to an end, Lincoln made it known that he would no longer seek to retain that honor. No definite reason was assigned, but there is reason to believe he concluded that any further stay in that body would conduce little to his political advancement. At this time, too, Lincoln's reputation was such that he could command considerable support for places of more importance. A year earlier he had been mentioned among others for the governorship. It does not appear that he encouraged this move, for even then he seems to have fixed his ambition on a seat in Congress. Between him and the place he desired, however, there were obstacles more difficult to surmount than any he had met in his legislative career.

This ambition to enter Congress is said to have caused friction between Lincoln and Judge Logan, with whom he was then associated. He had joined Logan in the spring of 1841 after John T. Stuart had entered Congress. There was little similarity between the two men. Logan was studious, methodical, and highly technical; Lincoln would hardly have been considered either of these, looked at merely as a lawyer. The fact that Logan, older, more experienced, and with the qualities

mentioned, chose him for associate, makes it clear that Lincoln was not without special abilities that gave promise of worthwhile achievement in his chosen field of law. Already he had, perhaps always had, an aptness for stating a proposition in a manner that appealed to a jury. It may be that his constant practice of story telling put him in closer touch with men in groups and made him better able to judge what would appeal to them. It happened, however, that Judge Logan had an ambition to sit in Congress, and that with his greater experience and fuller training he believed the junior partner should have given him the right of way. Lincoln's ambition for the place was too strong for any such generosity. Possibly relations between the two became somewhat unpleasant. Certain it is that he is found taking another partner in 1843 shortly after the close of his service in the State Legislature. William H. Herndon, the man who then became his partner and remained as such to the end of his days, tells of the beginning of the partnership. "That two such aspiring politicians, each striving to attain the same prize, should not dwell harmoniously together in the same office is not strange. Indeed, we may reasonably credit the story that they considered themselves rivals, and that numerous acrimonious passages took place between them. I was not surprised, therefore one morning, to see Mr. Lincoln come rushing up into my quarters and with more or less agitation tell me he had determined to sever the partnership with Logan. I confess I was surprised when he invited me to become his partner. I was young in the practice and was painfully aware of my want of ability and experience; but when he remarked in his earnest, honest way, 'Billy, I can trust

you, if you can trust me,' I felt relieved, and accepted the generous proposal. It has always been a matter of pride with me that during our long partnership, continuing on until it was dissolved by the bullet of the assassin Booth, we never had any personal controversy or disagreement. I never stood in his way for political honors or office, and I believe we understood each other perfectly. In after years, when he became more prominent, and our practice grew to respectable proportions, other ambitious practitioners undertook to supplant me in the partnership. One of the latter, more zealous than wise, charged that I was in a certain way weakening the influence of the firm. I am flattered to know that Lincoln turned on this last named individual with the retort, 'I know my own business, I reckon. I know Billy Herndon better than anybody, and even if what you say of him is true I intend to stick by him.'"

Few partnerships have been so entirely harmonious, so free from unpleasant features, and especially where continued over so long a period. Also few partnerships have produced results so entirely satisfactory to the parties concerned as that which brought Abraham Lincoln and young Herndon together. As a rule it is the younger man who expects to, and who does derive most benefit from a partnership of this kind. As seen in the light of after years and events the association of Lincoln and Herndon gave more to the older. As a rule, too, it is the man of smaller talent that receives the stronger mental stimulus where such contacts are established. The reverse appears to have followed in this instance. No one would claim that Herndon was the stronger of the two forces thus brought together, and Herndon him-

self, would have been the last to have advanced such a claim; but weighing closely the effects produced by each upon the other, there is much reason to believe it was Lincoln, the greater force, that was most strongly influenced.

Any deviation of the rules mentioned may be accounted for by the varying elements that entered into the make-up of the two men. Lincoln was always a seeker after knowledge in a broad way, arriving at fixed conclusions rarely, except after exhaustive analysis. His mind had a wide range of speculation for any subject that came before it. Such a mind does not reach the stage of assurance as quickly as that other type that has in it less of breadth, less of the exhaustive, but more of the vivid. This type, with a lesser range of speculation, is more quickly and strongly convinced. The swing of the pendulum in them is less extended, and there is less room for doubts and uncertainties. Herndon had such a mind, and with it high enthusiasms. He held few half-beliefs. He could believe until he felt in his "very bones," and of his beliefs none was stronger than that of the wrongness of slavery and the righteousness of the fight against it. He believed strongly, too, that his partner was an unusual man and likely to mount high in the world. Probably he early connected the two beliefs and saw in Lincoln the victor in the fight to end the former. Certain it is that the younger man is seen constantly watching over and promoting the desires of the older, and with somewhat the care of a parent. Always in the twenty years of their association he is planning the advancement of Lincoln and the overthrow of slavery.

Wherever in this land a book was written, a speech

made, or a magazine or newspaper article brought forth that tended to verify the proclamation of the fathers of the republic "that all men are created equal," it was Herndon who examined it carefully, and if there was force in the argument he saw that it came to Mr. Lincoln's eyes. It was he who followed the movement, inaugurated in Britain a generation earlier by Wilberforce, to its final success in the British West Indies, making the air of those islands as incapable of sustaining slavery as Lord Mansfield had found that of the mother country to be more than a half century earlier. And whatever lesson or argument could be drawn from that movement was brought to the attention of the senior partner. To his already intimate knowledge of the subject, was added that of the statecraft of Britain.

Lincoln's every move was seen and noted, whether mental or physical; even to how he stood in speaking, how he placed his feet in walking, and how he ate an apple. No such careful observation of one man by another has been seen since the day when James Boswell observed Samuel Johnson and his idiosyncrasies. But in Herndon there was nothing whatever of the sycophant; rather, there was something of a creator. In the making of the man Abraham Lincoln, one of the large individual factors was the man William H. Herndon. This young man loved great men but was in no wise awed by them. It took such a man to write Theodore Parker, eight years his senior and one of the giants of that day: "Quit reading and writing, if you can, and go off on a spree."

More noticeable than any temporary strain on the friendship of Lincoln and Logan over their clashing

ambitions, was the fact that Lincoln and two other men, all ambitious for the same honor, went through a strenuous campaign without any loss of friendship. Both Edward D. Baker and John J. Hardin sought the nomination on the Whig side for the election of 1844. The convention of the Whigs in Sangamon county selected Baker with a long residence there, over Lincoln, who was made one of the delegates to the general convention. Lincoln was thus placed in the position of having to fight to put his rival over. He saw something of the humor of the thing and in a letter to Speed told him: "We had a meeting of the Whigs of the County here on the last Monday, to appoint delegates to a district Convention; and Baker beat me, and got the delegation to go for him. The meeting in spite of my attempt to decline it, appointed me one of the delegates, so that in getting Baker the nomination, I shall be fixed a good deal like a fellow who is made groomsman to a man that has cut him out, and is marrying his own dear gal!"

Baker, victorious over Lincoln, was yet denied the prize he sought, for it was Hardin who received the nomination in the district convention held at the town of Pekin. Here with Lincoln strongly supporting the man who had won the indorsement of Sangamon county from him, the first ballot had resulted in a tie vote of fifteen each for Hardin and Baker, but at that moment, another delegate arrived, a close friend of Baker, but from a county that had instructed him for Hardin. After he had explained this to Baker and his intention to abide by his instructions, the latter replied: "You are right, there is no other way." Baker then withdrew his candidacy and Hardin was nominated by acclamation.

Lincoln supported him energetically in the campaign which followed.

The hard fight left the friendship of the three men unshaken, but Lincoln had felt keenly the defeat he had received in his own county of Sangamon. In a letter to a friend in Menard county, he writes a letter explaining the result. "It is truly gratifying to me to learn that while the people of Sangamon have cast me off, my old friends of Menard, who have known me longest and best, stick to me. It would astonish if not amuse the older citizens to learn that I (a stranger, friendless, uneducated, penniless boy, working on a flat-boat at ten dollars per month) have been put down here as the candidate of pride, wealth, and aristocratic family distinction. Yet, so, chiefly, it was. There was, too, the strangest combination of church influence against me. Baker is a Campbellite, and therefore as I suppose, with few exceptions, got all that church. My wife has some relations in the Presbyterian churches and some with the Episcopal churches, and therefore, wherever it would tell, I was set down as either the one or the other, while it was everywhere contended that no Christian ought to go for me, because I belonged to no church, was suspected of being a deist, and had talked about fighting a duel. With all these things Baker, of course, had nothing to do; nor do I complain of them. As to his own church going for him I think that was right enough; and as to the influences I have spoken of in the other, though they were very strong, it would be grossly untrue and unjust to charge that they acted upon them in a body, or were very near so. I only mean that those influences

levied a tax of considerable per cent and throughout the religious controversy.”

Lincoln's first effort to enter the legislative body of his State had resulted in failure and his first effort to enter the legislative body of his nation had ended in failure. But if it was little more than a youth, and with small preparation, who sought the first place, it was a man, and with a profound knowledge of political craft, who sought the other.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

THE campaign of 1844 found Mr. Lincoln enthusiastically on the side of Henry Clay for President. This meant of course, that with the other Whigs he was opposed to the admission of Texas as a member of the Union. This opposition was based almost wholly on the opposition to slavery, which the greater part of the party believed would be extended into that state in the event of its admission. The party was not unreservedly committed to an anti-slavery platform, but it went further in its opposition to the extension of slavery than any major party had yet done.

Clay was a slave holder, but like most of the fathers of the Republic he believed slavery to be an evil and one that ultimately must be gotten rid of. Though Clay was the most admired of the American statesmen, the popular feeling was so strongly bent in favor of the admission of the new State and so strongly against Mexico in its futile attempts to crush its rebellious colony, that even the popularity of Clay was not sufficient to give victory to his party. By the closest of popular votes, the election had gone to the Democrats. Lincoln had been one of the electors for the Whigs and had delivered many speeches in the campaign, a number of them in

his old home section of Indiana where he met many of his boyhood acquaintances.

In that campaign the slavery question came to the front as one of the leading issues, in spite of the efforts of many of the leaders of the older political parties to keep so dangerous an issue in the background. The Whig leaders, reluctant to stand definitely against the slave system, because they realized it would make an end of the party in the southern States, found themselves confronted by a kind of insurrection in the North which took the form of the Liberty party, frankly dedicated to securing freedom for the slaves. James G. Birney, who had freed his own slaves in Alabama as an earnest of his own strong convictions, was chosen as its candidate. He received a comparatively small vote, as is likely to be the case with any new party under the American system, lacking both thorough organization as well as patronage; but, as is not often the case, the new party received enough votes in certain crucial states to defeat Clay, the most popular American statesman. So it was that James K. Polk, comparatively little known as compared with Clay, came to the Presidential office not long before held by his fellow-townsmen, Andrew Jackson, of Nashville, Tennessee. It was obvious that the anti-slavery sentiment was now a thing to be reckoned with.

In his own State in the northern section, Lincoln had seen a considerable number of followers of this party, and it became more necessary for him to make his own views on slavery clear to this group, for in the campaign for Congress the issue came up from time to time. This he did in a letter to Williamson Durley, in which he ques-

tioned the wisdom of the Liberty party's attitude in the last campaign.

"When I saw you at home," Lincoln began, "it was agreed that I should write to you and your brother Madison. Until I then saw you I was not aware of your being what is generally called an Abolitionist, or, as you call yourself, a Liberty man, though I well knew there were many such in your country.

"I was glad to hear that you intended to attempt to bring about, at the next election in Putnam, a union of the Whigs proper and such of the Liberty men as are Whigs in principle on all questions save only that of slavery. So far as I can perceive, by such union neither party need yield anything on the point in difference between them. If the Whig abolitionists of New York had voted with us last fall, Mr. Clay would now be President, Whig principles in the ascendant, and Texas not annexed; whereas, by the division, all that either had at stake in the contest was lost. And, indeed, it was extremely probable, before hand, that such would be the result. As I always understood, the Liberty men deprecated the annexation of Texas extremely; and this being so, why they should refuse to cast their votes (so) as to prevent it, even to me seemed wonderful. What was their process of reasoning, I can only judge from what a single one of them told me. It was this: 'We are not to do evil that good may come.' This general proposition is doubtless correct; but did it apply? If by your votes you could have prevented the extension, etc., of slavery, would it not have been good, and not evil, so to have used your votes, even though it involved the casting of them for a slave-holder? By the fruit the tree

is to be known. An evil tree cannot bring forth good fruit. If the fruit of electing Mr. Clay would have been to prevent the extension of slavery, could the act of electing have been evil?

"But I will not argue further. I perhaps ought to say that individually I never was much interested in the Texas question. I never could see much good to come of annexation, inasmuch as they were already a free republican people on our own model. On the other hand, I never could very clearly see how the annexation would augment the evil of slavery. It always seemed to me that slaves would be taken there in about equal numbers, with or without annexation. And if more were taken because of annexation, still there would be just so many the fewer left where they were taken from. It is possibly true, to some extent, that, with annexation, some slaves may be sent to Texas and continued in slavery that otherwise might have been liberated. To whatever extent this may be true, I think annexation an evil. I hold it to be a paramount duty of us in the free States, due to the Union of the States, and perhaps to liberty itself (paradox though it may seem), to let the slavery of the other States alone; while, on the other hand, I hold it to be equally clear that we should never knowingly lend ourselves, directly or indirectly, to prevent that slavery from dying a natural death—to find new places for it to live in, when it can no longer exist in the old. Of course I am not now considering what would be our duty in cases of insurrection among the slaves. To recur to the Texas question, I understand the Liberty men to have viewed annexation as a much greater evil than ever I did; and I would like to con-

vince you, if I could, that they could have prevented it, without violation of principle, if they had chosen."

There appears to have been some understanding between Hardin, Baker and Lincoln, with possibly Logan included, that each would content himself with one term in Congress. It was easier to make such an agreement than to live up to it on the part of the successful man, as was later experienced by Hardin with the end of his term in sight, as well as by Lincoln at a similar period, for each desired much to continue in the office. However, Hardin and Baker having reached the goal, and the end of the former's term being in sight, Lincoln was soon actively seeking support for the place. Such a situation would have precipitated enmity between men of ordinary type; but though each sought by all honorable means to promote his own interests there was no break in their friendship, and finally Hardin conceded the nomination to Lincoln, who at once launched strongly into the campaign.

In the meantime, Peter Cartwright, a widely known Methodist preacher and evangelist, had received the nomination for the Democratic party. That campaign was long and hard fought. The Democratic candidate was especially noted for the physical energy with which he thundered forth his denunciations of the ungodly. He had but little less patience with the self-contained conservatives in the pulpit and church than he had for those whom he denounced as hell-bound sinners. Listening to the prayer of a church officer one day that had in it much more of the rational than of fervor, he is said to have exclaimed: "Brother, three prayers like the one you have just prayed, would freeze hell over."

There is a story that during this campaign Lincoln happened one evening to be in a town where Cartwright was holding a meeting and went in to hear the sermon. As was commonly done at that day, Cartwright near the close of the service called upon the Christians in the audience to stand; after this he called for those who desired to be saved and go to heaven to stand. Lincoln stood on neither occasion. The story goes on that the preacher, addressing himself directly to the obstinate one, proceeded: "I have asked those who expected to go to heaven, to rise, I will now ask those who expect to go to hell to rise." There was deep silence, but with the eyes of the congregation fixed on him, Lincoln kept his seat. At this Cartwright said: "I see Mr. Lincoln in this audience and as he has not chosen to answer any of the questions asked, I should now like to ask him where does he expect to go?" Lincoln slowly arose and in a hesitant manner, said: "I had not expected to participate in the service here this evening otherwise than to lend my presence, but since it is insisted that I tell Mr. Cartwright my expectations, I will yield to the demand and let him know that I am expecting in the near future to go to Congress." It is said that the meeting closed shortly thereafter.

Cartwright had honesty of purpose in a high degree, and in this the two opponents were strikingly similar. In two other respects these men held like views. Both were strongly opposed to slavery and both were strongly opposed to drinking. Here all similarities ended, and even here their widely divergent temperaments made their attitudes toward the two things they both hated, very different. With Cartwright there were no shadings

blending between right and wrong in his fellows. What he saw he saw vividly and sometimes violently. The things he condemned he condemned strongly and positively. For Lincoln, there was good and bad, or bad and good in all men. He rarely saw the one entirely detached from the other, and so it was he was never able to condemn violently even the worst of men. It would be difficult to think of any other historic figure possessed of so vast a tolerance and so large a charity for the frailties of his fellows.

In the ensuing campaign the old charges, that Lincoln belonged to the aristocracy, that he was a deist, that he had engaged in a duel, and that he had asserted that drunkards were as good as any other people, were repeated with much frequency. That first charge appears to have caused him serious worry, for it cut him deeply to think that the friends of the old days there at New Salem, the unswerving loyalties of the "Clary's Grove Boys" should be cooled or lost because of any fancied preference on his part for the aristocratic folk he had become allied with by reason of his marriage. Perhaps Lincoln prized the friendship of these "Boys," as they always remained to him, more than that of any group anywhere. It was they that had been with him, regardless of where he fought, or with whom, like the Old Guard of the great Corsican. To Matheney, one of them, and best man at his wedding, he said with deep emotion that he was anything but proud and aristocratic. "Why Jim, I am now and always shall be the same Abe Lincoln I was when you first saw me."

The election showed that the friends of the old days were still his friends and not to be alienated by the reck-

less gossip of those who had never known, and perhaps could not know, Abe Lincoln. He was elected by a large majority. Perhaps his election to the office gave him less pleasure than this new assurance that his friends had not cast him off. To Speed he now writes: "Being elected to Congress, though I am grateful to our friends for having done it, has not pleased me as much as I expected."

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

ARRIVING at Washington in November, 1847, Lincoln found men there little different from what they were in Springfield, little different from what he would have found them in New York, or London; perhaps but little different from what he might have found, had it been his privilege some twenty centuries earlier to see them, at Rome or Athens. He knew men, knew how they delight in changing all things around them, but will not change themselves.

These men listened to his quaint stories, some of them of a kind not told around women or children, with the same obvious pleasure as other men had listened to them back in Illinois.

"I soon learned to know and admire Lincoln," says Dr. Busey in his *PERSONAL REMINISCENCES AND RECOLLECTIONS*, "for his simple and unostentatious manners, kind-heartedness, and amusing jokes, anecdotes, and witticisms. When about to tell an anecdote during a meal he would lay down his knife and fork, place his elbows upon the table, rest his face between his hands, and begin with the words, 'That reminds me,' and proceed. Everybody prepared for the explosion sure to follow. I recall with vivid pleasure the scene of merriment at the dinner after

his first speech in the House of Representatives, occasioned by the descriptions, by himself and others of the congressional mess, of the uproar in the House during its delivery.

"Congressman Lincoln was always neatly but very plainly dressed, very simple and approachable in manner, and unpretentious. He attended to his business, going promptly to the House and remaining till the session adjourned, and appeared to be familiar with the progress of legislation."

Because this man knew that men do not change and do not like other men who affect to change, he went on his way just as he had done in the old days back on the prairies of his home State. And men there in Washington seeing that this man was himself and did not care to be any other than himself, liked him the more, just as the other men had done back there in the West. So it was that whether they saw him at his boarding club or mess, or at his bowling alley near by, they found a pleasure in him, and he in them. He in no wise departed from his life-long habit, of what has sometimes been thought the custom of Americans of that day and really was the practice of some of "plain living and high thinking." An example of a phase of this characteristic is seen in a story related by one of his friends, who says that after getting some books at the library one day in such number that they made an unwieldy bundle, he drew a bandanna handkerchief from his pocket, knotted it around the books, swung the bundle on one end of a stick, balanced the stick over his shoulder with one hand and with the books at the other, proceeded on his

way home, and a few days later returned them in the same manner.

The war with Mexico had raged one and a half years, when Abraham Lincoln took his seat, December 6, 1847, as a member of the lower house of Congress. He realized that this was a highly popular war. The wild enthusiasm of the men of his home state to enlist with three times as many presenting themselves as could be received, made this clear. He saw his friend and generous political opponent, Edward D. Baker, march away at the head of his regiment. Another friend, and equally generous, John J. Hardin, left the chair, which Lincoln was to fill, in the House of Representatives and marched on to the Rio Grande, where he fell at the head of his regiment.

Lincoln had entered Congress, persuaded both by his own observation and close analysis of the surrounding circumstances, as well as by the tenets of his party, that his nation was engaged in an unwarranted war. The uniform success of the United States armies in no-wise altered his viewpoint. Their gallantry and steadfastness might in victory after victory and continual advancing into the heart of a hostile country, wring whatever of glory might be found, but the Whigs found little satisfaction in a gallantry that would result in strengthening the slave oligarchies of the South, already so strong as to be a continual menace to other sections of the country.

Convinced that the war was unjust in its beginning and unrighteous in the end for which it was designed, Lincoln only eighteen days after taking his seat arose and presented to the body certain resolutions which became known as the "Spot Resolutions." These resolu-

tions, cleverly and adroitly formulated, were designed to let the nation know that the war with Mexico had been brought about, not by an invasion of American territory by the armies of Mexico, but by the machinations of President Polk and his advisers.

There have been men who believed that Lincoln belonged to the group of politicians who carefully gauge and follow the fitful gusts of the popular will, rather than to the statesmen who ponder and weigh and analyze far reaching and beneficent principles, and who at the risk of their political lives rise or fall with their beliefs. In every age the two types have been seen, as well as the various shades that range between these two. Nor can we wonder at the rarity of those who stand by their policies in the face of hostile public sentiment, remembering how often the rewards these men most desire depend on the approval of this same public sentiment, so ready to veer from clamorous approval to clamorous execration. When Lincoln, then, stood up and impeached the justice of this war, which he knew to be highly popular and most especially so among the men of his own State, he was displaying a bravery rarer by far than that of either of his friends, Hardin or Baker. He had met the supreme test with which self-governing people sometimes confront their leaders, that of trying to halt the stampede of a war-maddened nation.

On January 12, 1848, he supported his resolutions with a speech which by its convincing clearness and cogency gained him as much respect among the members of the House as it gained him disapproval by the men of his State. For in Illinois this war with its accumulated victories and no major defeats, with its horrors mostly too

far away to be clearly seen, and with its likelihood of enlargement of the national domain, retained its popular hold on the people. No political party in the nation, no man hoping for political preferment, could oppose it and thrive. The Whigs, while convinced that the war was wrongfully precipitated by the President, were yet constrained to vote whatever supplies were asked by the government, since all political groups were equally represented at the front and few were the men of prominence who did not have friends or kinsmen there. The son of Henry Clay, who by the swing of a few votes would have defeated Polk and averted the war, died on the field of battle, as likewise did the son of Daniel Webster, who strongly opposed the war.

In his speech, urging the resolutions, Lincoln said, among other things: "To show their relevancy, I propose to state my understanding of the true rule for ascertaining the boundary between Texas and Mexico. It is that wherever Texas was exercising jurisdiction was hers; and wherever Mexico was exercising jurisdiction was hers; and that whatever separated the actual exercise of jurisdiction of the one from that of the other was the true boundary between them. If, as is probably true, Texas was exercising jurisdiction along the western bank of the Nueces and Mexico was exercising jurisdiction along the eastern bank of the Rio Grande, then neither river was the boundary, but the uninhabited country between the two was. The extent of our territory in that region depended not on any treaty fixed boundary (for no treaty had attempted it), but on revolution." He followed this with a statement that became strangely applicable to the condition that confronted him when, as

President-elect, he pleaded with the South thirteen years later to remain loyal to the Union. The statement in question appeared to give validity to the contention of the South that it had the right to secede. Setting out a general principle for cases such as that in which Texas had separated from Mexico, he said: "Any people anywhere, being inclined and having the power, have the right to rise up and shake off the existing government and form a new one that suits them better. This is a most valuable and most sacred right—a right which we hope and believe, is to liberate the world. Nor is this right confined to cases in which the whole people of an existing government may choose to exercise it. Any portion of such people, that can, may revolutionize and make their own, of so much of the territory as they inhabit."

It was easy for southern leaders, in 1861, to present this general principle as favorable to the South's claim of the right to secede from the Union. And especially was this so after the fall of Fort Sumter. But the force of their argument was somewhat weakened by the fact that in the general principle thus laid down by Mr. Lincoln, the right to revolutionize was made contingent on the power to sustain it. At the end of four years they found this element wanting.

This speech, developed with mathematical precision, went on to a somewhat oratorical finish, tending to show that President Polk, against the advice of its commander, ordered the American army across the Nueces and the uninhabited country between, to the bank of the Rio Grande, into a well established Mexican settlement over which the American government had never asserted

sovereignty and where there was a collision with Mexican soldiers. This new member of Congress had at once become a man to be reckoned with, a man who from that time demanded attention. There are speeches that do not admit of effective answer. Such a speech was this. The President gave it the wisest answer possible under such conditions; the answer of silence. Less wise than he, the men back home in Illinois, did not follow his example. Soon Lincoln heard of their answers to his speech. One of the most ambitious of these was one from Herndon, who on this question differed from Lincoln.

A close examination of these resolutions inquiring into the cause of this war, and of the speech made in their support, as well as a letter written to Herndon in defense of his action, demonstrates Lincoln's acute powers of analysis which enabled him to isolate and clarify even the more latent weaknesses of an abstract proposition, and at the same time to throw on them so strong a light of reason as to destroy them. It is not difficult to see why such a man was recognized as a dangerous opponent in debate, and why so able and vigorous a debater as Douglas endeavored to avoid him.

In his letter to Herndon, Lincoln wrote as follows:

"DEAR WILLIAM:

"Your letter of the 29th of January was received last night, being exclusively a constitutional argument, I wish to submit some reflections upon it in the same spirit of kindness that I know actuates you. Let me first state what I understand to be your position. It is that if it becomes necessary to repel in-

vasion the President may without violation of the Constitution cross the line and invade the territory of another country, and that whether such necessity exists in any given case, the President is the sole judge.

“Before going further consider well whether this is or is not your position. If it is, it is a position that neither the President, himself, nor any friend of his, so far as I know, has ever taken. Their only positions are—first, that the soil was ours when the hostilities commenced; and second, whether it was rightfully ours or not, Congress had annexed it, and the President for that reason was bound to defend it; both of which are clearly proved to be false, in fact as you can prove your house is mine. The soil was not ours and Congress did not annex or attempt to annex it. But to return to your position. Allow the President to invade a neighboring nation whenever he shall deem it necessary to repel an invasion and you allow him to do so whenever he may choose to say he deems it necessary for such purpose, and you allow him to make war at pleasure. Study to see if you can fix any limit to his power in this respect after having given him so much as you propose. If today he should choose to say he thinks it necessary to invade Canada to prevent the British from invading us, how could you stop him. You may say to him, ‘I see no probability of the British invading us;’ but he will say to you, ‘Be silent: I see it, if you don’t.’

“The provision of the Constitution giving the war-making power to Congress was dictated as I

understand it, by the following reasons: kings had always been involving and impoverishing their people in wars, pretending generally if not always, that the good of the people was the object. This our convention understood to be the most oppressive of all kingly oppressions, and they resolved to so frame the Constitution that no man should hold the power of bringing this oppression upon us. But your view destroys the whole matter and places our President where kings have always stood.

“Write soon again,

“A. LINCOLN.”

The men who, here and there, have believed that this man was merely, a “shifty, insincere politician, incompetent as an executive, and a vulgar, indecent boor, as a man,” lifted by high fortune to the seats of the mighty, there to pass on to posterity the Emancipation Proclamation, have given too little thought to the whole background of the man. Had they done this they would have assuredly discovered many acts that suggested unmistakably the inner greatness of him who is proclaimed through all the world today. He did not succeed in stopping the war stampede, and it went on to a victorious close on July 4, 1848. No human being could have done this; but he displayed a courage and skill and determination that must have caused consternation even in the White House. Certainly one sees in his deeds there promise of the greatness that later was to carry his name to the farthest ends of time.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

AN ACT to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, presented to Congress by Abraham Lincoln on January 16, 1849, had in it much sequence and more prophecy. It constituted the highest act of service made by him during his term in Congress. Recalling the proceedings of the Illinois Legislature nearly twelve years earlier, it is remembered that a resolution was adopted by that body on March 3, 1837, declaring the right of property in slaves sacred to the slave-holding States, and that the "General Government cannot abolish slavery in the District of Columbia without a manifest breach of good faith." There were other declarations, but these two stand out clearest and indicate most as to the thought of the members of that Legislature. Lincoln, at that time just past twenty-eight years, had with five others voted against the resolution.

That vote must have been given serious consideration on his part, for, ambitious as he undoubtedly was for political advancement, he could hardly forget that the district which sent him to the Legislature was largely made up of southerners who if not slave-holders themselves, were thus allied by blood and sympathy with that group. But whatever his ambitions were, and however he jeopardized

his future, he voted against the slaveholders. Knowing the hesitancy of the average politician, whether of today or yesterday, to take any step that may irritate the greater part of his constituency, it might be expected that the matter would end with his vote against the resolution. But it will be recalled that some six weeks after the passage of that resolution, another resolution was presented. This resolution differed much from the first. In fact it was a protest against that other, and declared among other things for the undersigned, that "they believe the institution of slavery is founded on both injustice and bad policy." And to this the signers added: "They believe that the Congress of the United States has the power under the Constitution to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia," etc. This resolution, recklessly courageous considering both the time and place, even if there had been no nursling ambitions that might reach maturity only through the approbation of the constituents he was thus flaunting, indicates clearly the depth of Abraham Lincoln's conviction that slavery was founded both on injustice and bad policy.

That was the first of three great outstanding acts against slavery, forming a mighty trinity connecting the three periods of the manhood of Lincoln, and however much applause the world has given to the third of these acts, and however tremendous the results that followed the Emancipation Proclamation, there is much reason to feel that in true moral grandeur it is this first of the trinity of acts that ranks highest.

The act to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia was a carefully drawn measure with features that were expected to draw votes from all sections of the country.

It was introduced following a debate full of bitterness over another bill for the freeing of the slaves of the District, more sweeping in its tenor and less calculated to command sufficient votes to be enacted into law. It is likely that the hatreds generated in the debates on this first bill made it impossible to carry through the second, despite the provisions that it had been hoped would receive favorable consideration even from the slave-holding group. After designating classes that were not thereafter to be held in slavery in the District, which included slaves not already owned by residents, and unborn children, the bill went on to permit those coming into the District in an official character to bring and retain their domestic servants, without being controlled by the pending measure, and then provided that children born to slave mothers after January 1, 1850, should be held for service as apprentices to a specified age, during which suitable support and education was to be provided them.

It appears that Lincoln had studied closely the measures that had been presented in Great Britain and other lands for abolishing slavery in their dominions, and provision was made as in them for compensating the owners of the slaves. Here was a measure broad enough to have given reasonable satisfaction to all, and that offered a sound basis for eliminating the brutal system from all the land; but the irritated slave-holders would hear of no plans that contemplated making a truth of certain traditions as to liberty and equality that had in the first period of the nation been highly popular. So was rendered futile the peaceful efforts of a man always inclined to peace to solve a problem that was to confront him at another

day, when he would be compelled in its solution to have recourse to the method of blood and iron.

There are still many who believe that the man who was nominated for the office of President at the perilous period of 1860 was an obscure politician of only local renown, but who had served obscurely a term in Congress. This belief is entirely lacking in truth. Lincoln at the time he was elected to Congress was among the most prominent men of his State and his reputation as a man of ability, and as a speaker of great force and persuasiveness, was extended beyond State lines from the day of his defense of his "Spot Resolutions." As the only Whig from Illinois in Congress, he naturally was given high consideration and more than the average of appointments on committees. He was a delegate to the Whig national convention held at Philadelphia in July of 1848, where he strongly urged the nomination of General Zachary Taylor. While he had in the past supported Henry Clay, it was his belief at this time that a soldier was the only man who could carry the Whigs to victory. He was highly optimistic at Taylor's nomination and returned to Washington confident that his party would win an overwhelming triumph. As usual following a party convention there was much campaigning, and most of the members were thinking and acting on the basis of party advantage.

The Democratic party had chosen for its nominee, Lewis Cass, who had participated in the Black Hawk War, as well as in the War of 1812, and some of the more ardent members of his party in their effort to match the achievements of the Whig candidate rather overstressed his prestige as a soldier, while at the same time claiming

a superiority because of his broad civil experience. Among the Whigs there was yet some resentment at the choice of Taylor as the head of their party, since they knew he had given little attention to party principles. These men were not willing to justify the choice of the party on the grounds of expediency.

It was partly in answer to the doubts raised as to Taylor's party principles that Lincoln on July 27, 1848, took the floor and delighted the House with one of his typical stump speeches, but with even more than the usual of his inimitable drollery. In it he recalled his own experiences in the Black Hawk War, not for self-glorification but to show the more comical features of it, and by comparison and analogy to disparage the importance the Democrats attached to Cass' part in that conflict. In part, he said:

"By the way, Mr. Speaker, did you know that I am a military hero? Yes sir; in the days of the Black Hawk War I fought, bled and came away. Speaking of General Cass' career reminds me of my own. I was not at Stillman's defeat, but I was about as near it as Cass was to Hull's surrender; and, like him, I saw the place very soon afterward. It is quite certain I did not break my sword, for I had none to break; but I bent a musket pretty badly on one occasion. If Cass broke his sword the idea is he broke it in desperation. I bent the musket by accident. If General Cass went in advance of me in picking huckleberries, I guess I surpassed him in charges upon wild onions. If he saw any live, fighting Indians, it was more than I did; but I had a good many bloody struggles with the mosquitoes, and although I never fainted from loss of blood, I can truly say I was often very hungry. Mr.

Speaker, if I should ever conclude to doff whatever our Democratic friends may suppose there is of black-cockade federalism about me, and therefore they take me up as their candidate for the Presidency, I protest they shall not make fun of me, as they have of General Cass, by attempting to write me into a military hero."

Aside from this raillery there was much serious if partisan argument in this speech, and it was obvious to the members that here was a political speaker of the highest skill. The campaign was now well under way, and naturally a man thus accomplished received many invitations to address the people in the interest of his party. He made several speeches in New England in the month of September, where he made clear his position on the question of slavery, in which the people of that section, excited by the constant and eloquent efforts of Phillips and Garrison, were intensely interested. While in the East he met many men of more than local fame, and listened to speeches made by several of the famous sons of New England. At a meeting in Boston, Lincoln spoke on the same platform with William H. Seward and talked at length with him after the meeting. On the day following this speech Lincoln started for home, probably well satisfied with his trip. Back in Illinois he made his first speech in Chicago, urging the election of General Taylor, and made many speeches throughout the State.

Home at last, he became fully aware of the disaffection among his former followers, due to his opposition to the Mexican war. Naturally he would have been pleased had he found sentiment favorable to his continuance in Congress, but it was evident that he had lost some of the hold he once had on these home folk. Besides, in seek-

ing the place he had agreed, as had Baker and Harding before him, to a one term rotation; being unwilling to repudiate this, he made no effort to secure the nomination, which went to Judge Stephen T. Logan, who was defeated in the general election.

At the same election, General Taylor was chosen as President. Because of Lincoln's prominence and activity it was confidently expected that some substantial recognition would be given him. The place of Commissioner of the General Land Office was looked upon as the most desirable open to him; but a number of his friends were seeking it, and though it appears that by timely and vigorous effort he might have had it, he did not make the effort until it became evident that his friends could not succeed, and so he lost the place and, incidentally, one of the friends, who believed that Lincoln's belated effort had worked to hurt that friend's chance.

There is some reason to believe that Lincoln regarded his political career ended by his course as to the Mexican War and that he now decided to do what he had never done before—put all of his energy into the practice of law. Up to this time he probably considered law, aside from being a method of attaining his daily bread, merely as a means to an end, and that end was political preferment. Convinced now that his hopes of political prestige so long held, "were such stuff as dreams are made on," he threw himself more fully into the law probably than ever before. He remained the senior member of the firm of Lincoln and Herndon, and the junior member had worked steadily to retain the general business of the firm, and with sufficient success to report on Lincoln's return: "Our practice was as extensive as that of any other firm

at the bar." Lincoln, Herndon adds, "realized that much of this was due to my efforts, and on his return, he therefore suggested that he had no right to share in the business and profits which I had made. I responded that, as he had aided me and given me prominence when I was young and needed it, I could afford now to be grateful if not generous. I therefore recommended a continuation of the partnership, and we went on as before. I could notice a difference in Lincoln's movement as a lawyer from this time forward. He had begun to realize a certain lack of discipline—a want of mental training and method. Ten years had wrought some change in the law, and more in the lawyers, of Illinois. The conviction had settled in the minds of the people that the pyrotechnics of court room and stump oratory did not necessarily imply extensive or profound ability in the lawyer who resorted to it. The courts were becoming graver and more learned, and the lawyer was learning as a preliminary and indispensable condition to success that he must be a close reasoner, besides having at command a broad knowledge of the principles on which the statutory law is constructed. There was of course the same riding on circuit as before, but the courts had improved in tone and morals, and there was less laxity—at least it appeared so to Lincoln. Political defeat had wrought a marked effect on him. It went below the skin and made a changed man of him. He was not soured at his seeming political decline, but still he determined to eschew politics from that time forward and devote himself entirely to the law. And now he began to make up for time lost in politics by studying the law in earnest. No man had greater power of appli-

cation than he. Once fixing his mind on any subject, nothing could interfere with or disturb him.

"Frequently I would go out on the circuit with him. We, usually, at the little country inns occupied the same bed. In most cases the beds were too short for him, and his feet would hang over the floor-board, thus exposing a limited expanse of shin bone. Placing a candle on a chair at the head of the bed, he would read and study for hours. I have known him to study in this position till two o'clock in the morning. Meanwhile, I and others who chanced to occupy the same room would be safely and soundly asleep. On the circuit in this way he studied Euclid until he could with ease demonstrate all the propositions in the six books. How he could maintain his mental equilibrium or concentrate his thoughts on an abstract mathematical proposition, while Davis, Logan, Swett, Edwards, and I so industriously and volubly filled the air with our interminable snoring was a problem none of us could ever solve. I was on the circuit with Lincoln probably one-fourth of the time. The remainder of my time was spent in Springfield looking after the business there, but I know that life on the circuit was a gay one. It was rich with incidents, and afforded the nomadic lawyers ample relaxation from all the irksome toil that fell to their lot. Lincoln loved it. I suppose it would be a fair estimate to state that he spent over half the year following Judges Treat and Davis around on the circuit. On Saturdays the court and attorneys, if within a reasonable distance, would usually start for their homes. Some went for a fresh supply of clothing, but the greater number went simply to spend a day of rest with their families. The only exception was Lincoln, who usually spent his Sundays with

the loungers at the country tavern, and only went home at the end of the circuit or term of court."

"At first," relates one of his colleagues on the circuit, "we wondered at it, but soon learned to account for his strange disinclination to go home. Lincoln himself never had much to say about home, and we never felt free to comment on it. Most of us had pleasant, inviting homes, and as we struck out for them I'm sure each one of us down in our hearts had a mingled feeling of pity and sympathy for him."

Mention is here made of the home life of Lincoln, of which much has been said and about which there has been no little controversy, some of which has tended almost to the fantastic. Here, since there are no new and original sources of information, there must be a careful choosing among the various narratives to present one that adjusts itself best to the information at hand. Herndon, as usual, has been the source of most of this information to which there has been violent dissent. There seems to be no reason to question that the home life of the Lincolns was not entirely what would be considered as ideal, if not in fact sometimes approaching general unhappiness. As for the cause of this we are left to form conclusions which best satisfy each separate individual. It may be that too much consideration of the difference in background and difference in training of the parties to this marriage has tended to a conclusion that there was much more unhappiness resulting therefrom than was really the case. And it may be that this marriage had in it no more of the unsatisfactory than the average, where there is no great difference in the cultural background of the parties. It is certainly not to be understood that all was unsatisfac-

tory in the Lincoln marital affairs; in fact, in some important respects there appears to have been much satisfaction. Few people who are highly ambitious live to see their highest ambitions fully satisfied. Mrs. Lincoln, who has been constantly referred to as extremely ambitious, so much so that she is said to have, even in her courtships, subordinated any preferences based on impulse or natural affection, lived to see her highest ambition realized, that of being the wife of a President. This wish she is said to have repeatedly expressed as a young woman. She is generally considered as having been an astute judge of men and their ability. As artist here, she must have discovered a profound pleasure in the superiority of the man she had chosen and in the constantly increasing recognition of it. Aside from these possibly superficial considerations, there must have been an abiding comfort in association with a man who at the same time was blessed with a temper such as has been seen in few men in any period, in any level of life, or in any land, and free even from the little cruelties and brutalities which are likely to be found in the best of men.

Loving power and prominence as she did there must have been immense pleasure in seeing her husband elected to Congress within four years of their marriage. Among the many pictures of her, not always drawn with a friendly brush, we take the following from Herndon: "When occasionally she came down to our office, it seemed to me then, that she was inordinately proud of her tall and ungainly husband. She saw in him bright prospects ahead, and his every move was watched by her with the closest interest. If to other persons he seemed homely, to her he was the embodiment of noble manhood, and

each succeeding day impressed upon her the wisdom of her choice of Lincoln over Douglas—if in reality she ever seriously accepted the latter's attentions. 'Mr. Lincoln may not be as handsome a figure,' she said one day in the office during her husband's absence, when the conversation turned on Douglas, 'but the people are perhaps not aware that his heart is as large as his arms are long.'"

Children came to her, four sons, and any mother would have found a continuous pleasure in the uniform kindness of the father to her sons, a kindness amounting almost to open indulgence. Decidedly, there is no occasion that anyone proffer pity to Mary Todd Lincoln because of her marriage to Abraham Lincoln. Whatever sympathy is to be extended should be given because of the heavy blows which fate struck repeatedly against her. Of the four sons three were to be taken by death between childhood and youth. At the very summit of his glorious career her husband was struck down before her eyes. For him, just ahead, was peace after so much turmoil and war. Just ahead for her, was comfort, happiness, prestige, and even the little envies of her world; this too, a solace to her proud soul.

But what of the other party to this union into which had entered so many discordant elements? What did it bring to the man who had dreaded so much to enter into it? The answer to this question may be given with less assurance than in the case of the woman partner to this union for this man had in his make-up much more of the enigmatic. Looked at through the lens of idealism, the prospect disclosed more presents of gloom than cheer. The frequent and violent fits of temper displayed by Mrs. Lincoln must have somewhat limited the periods of hap-

piness and satisfaction that are not entirely excluded from even more ill-assorted marriages. For any of the vast majority of men, with their quick resentments, their desire for retaliation and their natural cruelties, these temper explosions would have made this union well nigh intolerable to both parties to it, and would have left in it no thought of satisfaction or happiness. But Lincoln differed so much from the average of men, he possessed such vast tolerance, such kindness, and with these a certain stoicism, that he may have endured these lapses of Mrs. Lincoln with less difficulty than could another under such conditions. This stoicism, which made him the last to complain when out on the circuit about the poor food, uncomfortable beds and badly kept rooms, gave him a hardihood to face with less distress the ills that confronted him in his own household. Looked at, then, through the lens of commonplace experience, it may be that Lincoln managed to extract from apparently very untoward conditions some measure of satisfaction.

His wife had that kind of intelligence that gave her an interest in the world of men, which doubtless offered a basis of companionship in a case where the man had little interest in the world of women. She was capable, too, in the management of the home. Here she demanded and received the fullest responsibility. The extent of this is shown where, in the absence of Lincoln, the wife had alterations made, changing the home from a story and a half to a full two-story building. Lincoln on his return is said to have walked past the place a number of times, and then waggishly asked of a passer whether that was the home of Abraham Lincoln; and being so informed, he walked in, knocked heavily at the door, where

he was met by an irate and scolding mistress of the house, for Mrs. Lincoln had observed his prank from behind the curtains, as one report has it. While otherwise, Mrs. Lincoln was capable in home management, her frequent explosions of temper made it difficult for her to retain servants for long periods. One of these who made a longer stay of it than the rest discloses the secret of it in the fact that Lincoln pleaded with her and added a dollar a week to her wages, but with the injunction that the transaction was to be kept from the knowledge of the mistress of the house. Herndon tells that "frequently, after tempestuous scenes between the mistress and her servant, Lincoln, at the first opportunity would place his hand upon the latter's shoulder with the admonition, 'Mary, keep up your courage.'"

Another case is thus related by Herndon: "A man once called at the house to learn why Mrs. Lincoln had so unceremoniously discharged his niece from her employ. Mrs. Lincoln met him at the door, and being somewhat wrought up, gave vent to her feelings, resorting to such violent gestures and emphatic language that the man was glad to beat a hasty retreat. He at once started out to find Lincoln, determined to exact from him proper satisfaction for his wife's action. Lincoln was entertaining a crowd in a store at the time. The man, still laboring under some agitation, called him to the door and made the demand. Lincoln listened for a moment to his story. 'My friend,' he interrupted, 'I regret to hear this, but let me ask you in all candor, can't you endure for a few moments what I have had as my daily portion for the last fifteen years?' The words were spoken so mournfully and with such a look of distress that the man was

completely disarmed. It was a case that appealed to his feelings. Grasping the unfortunate husband's hand, he expressed in no uncertain terms his sympathy, and even apologized for having approached him. He said no more about the infuriated wife and Lincoln afterward had no better friend in Springfield."

The same writer has added: "Mr. Lincoln never had a confidant, and therefore never unbosomed himself to others. He never spoke of his trials to me or, so far as I knew, to any of his friends. It was a great burden to carry, but he bore it sadly enough and without a murmur. I could always realize when he was in distress, without being told. He was not exactly an early riser, that is he never usually appeared at the office till about nine o'clock in the morning. I usually preceded him an hour. Sometimes however, he would come down as early as seven o'clock—in fact, on one occasion I remember he came down before daylight. If, on arriving at the office, I found him in, I knew instantly that a breeze had sprung up over the domestic sea, and that the waters were troubled. He would either be lying on the lounge, looking skyward, or doubled up in a chair with his feet resting on the sill of a back window. He would not look up on my entering, and only answered my 'Good morning,' with a grunt. I at once busied myself with pen and paper, or ran through the leaves of some book; but the evidence of his melancholy and distress was so plain, and his silence so significant, that I would grow restless myself, and finding some excuse to go to the courthouse or elsewhere, would leave the room.

"The door of the office opening into a narrow hallway was half glass, with a curtain on it working on brass rings

strung on a wire. As I passed out on these occasions I would draw the curtain across the glass, and before I reached the bottom of the stairs I could hear the key turn in the lock, and Lincoln was alone in his gloom. An hour in the clerk's office at the courthouse, an hour longer in a neighboring store having passed, I would return. By this time either a client had dropped in and Lincoln was propounding the law, or else the cloud of despondency had passed away, and he was busy in the recital of an Indiana story to whistle off the recollection of the morning's gloom. Noon having arrived, I would depart homeward for my dinner. Returning within an hour, I would find him still in the office—although his house stood but a few squares away,—lunching on a slice of cheese and a handful of crackers which in my absence he had brought up from the store below. Separating for the day at five or six o'clock in the evening, I would still leave him behind, either sitting on a box at the foot of the stairway, entertaining a few loungers, or killing time in the same way at the court-house steps. A light in the office after dark attested his presence there till late along in the night, when, after all the world had gone to sleep, the tall form of the man destined to be the nation's President, could have been seen strolling along in the shadows of the trees and buildings, and quietly slipping in through the door of a modest frame house, which it pleased the world, in a conventional way, to call his home."

Mrs. Ninian Edwards, the sister of Mrs. Lincoln, tells the following of a visit to Washington and how much it affected Lincoln when she made known the early date of her departure: "When I announced my intention of leaving Washington he was much affected at the news of

my departure. We were strolling through the White House grounds, when he begged me with tears in his eyes to remain longer. 'You have such strong control over Mary,' he contended, 'that when troubles come you can console me.' The picture of the man's despair never faded from my vision. Long after my return to Springfield, on reverting to the sad separation, my heart ached because I was unable in my feeble way to lighten his burden."

The direct reference to Mrs. Lincoln here would seem to indicate that not a little of the President's despair had its cause in the eccentricities of his wife.

CHAPTER TWENTY

DURING this period of his highest legal activity and greatest resistance to the appeals of politics, Lincoln was engaged in a number of law cases which have some special claim to our notice. Of these, that of the Illinois Central Railroad Company vs. the County of McLean, and George Parke, etc., is of first importance in a number of respects, among which is the monetary stakes, which were certainly immense.

The Illinois Central Railroad, projected as the pioneer artery of transportation between the North and South, binding together and intermingling the products of the regions of the Great Lakes and those of the Gulf of Mexico, had met with the heartiest approval and support on the part of the State of Illinois and in its charter had been given generous land grants as well as immunity from taxation by the Legislature, along with other rights to public lands through the act of Congress. In return for this the railroad agreed to pay the State an amount equal to seven per centum of its gross income. It was but a short time before certain counties questioned the right of the Legislature to thus give immunity against their taxing rights. McLean county, in 1853, ordered an assessment laid on the property of the road and soon after

the Sheriff, George Parke, was ordered to levy this tax. It was then that the railroad brought its bill in chancery, asking that McLean county and George Parke be enjoined and restrained from collecting the tax. This bill was dismissed, and the railroad having lost the first move, through its counsel, M. Brayman, J. F. Joy and A. Lincoln, took its appeal to the Supreme Court. The first two were regular counsel for the railroad, and the firm of Lincoln and Herndon had been specially retained in the case. The only question involved was "whether the property and franchises attempted to be taxed by the defendants, or any part of them, is, in law, liable to County taxation." The Supreme Court reversed the decree of the lower court.

It is almost conclusive of Lincoln's high rating among the lawyers of this State, that he was chosen to represent the corporation in a matter so vital to its future welfare. The immediate outcome of his relation to the case is not as clear and certain as the case itself. It appears that shortly after the decision, Lincoln presented his bill to the company at its office in Chicago for \$2,000. As to the reply of the official to whom it was presented, there are varying accounts, the more plausible one being that in declining to pay it, he remarked: "Why sir, this is as much as Daniel Webster, himself, would have charged." Lincoln made no argument with him, but withdrew his bill and left. It is established that the official in question was not George B. McClellan, afterward General at the head of the United States armies under President Lincoln, as has been sometimes reported. Discussing the railroad's refusal to pay the bill with some of his friends of the circuit, they advised that he had been too modest in his

charge and that he raise the amount to \$5,000 and sue for the same, which was done. When the case was called the attorney for the railroad had not arrived and judgment was given in the full amount. On his arrival later in the day Lincoln consented to have the case re-heard and introduced the statement of six other lawyers that the bill was reasonable and just and again was given judgment in full amount of the claim, which was paid by the railroad some weeks later.

There were a number of other railroads, too, among his clients as well as certain insurance companies. It is seen that he represents the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad Company, for which he filed an appearance and confessed judgment in the amount of \$312,133.35 on March 4, 1856, in the United States Court at Springfield, and that he represented the Chicago, Alton and St. Louis Railroad. Such cases establish his high rating as a lawyer far better than any mere enumeration of the proportion of decisions for and against him, which method has been presented exhaustively by an eminent authority on Lincoln. Lawyers themselves would probably smile broadly at this manner of attesting their skill and fitness, and defer judgment in the absence of clear information on the actual objectives sought to be attained by the parties to each lawsuit. They know that the complaining party may bring his suit for \$10,000, and at the same time be willing to adjust that suit for \$1,000. They know, too, that the defending party in a suit for that same amount, while denying any liability whatever, might gladly accept a judgment for five thousand dollars. It is only when these things are known that the laurels of victory can be rightly awarded in lawsuits.

It is not to be understood that Lincoln's practice was confined only to the large corporations or the very rich, for that certainly was not the case, and he doubtless represented a larger proportion of the rank and file of the citizenship than many of his associates on the circuit and at Springfield. The very number of the cases of Lincoln and Herndon give some indication of this. Paul M. Angle shows that at the convening of court on March 20, 1855, forty-four cases of Lincoln and Herndon were called, and it is known that he made a wider circuit of counties than the other lawyers.

Among his more noted cases was that of *Hurd vs. the Rock Island Railroad Bridge*, better known as the "Effie Afton Case," in the United States District Court at Chicago, before Judge McLean, in 1857. This case arose when the steamboat *Effie Afton* collided with the railroad bridge. The boat took fire and was completely destroyed, while the bridge was considerably damaged. The accident brought two great commercial and industrial forces into conflict. One, the older, was made up of those interested in the immense commerce borne up the Mississippi and its tributaries, the other, and newer, made up of those who were awakened to the realization of the vast commerce that would move between the older States of the East and the newer States that were rapidly coming into existence in the extensive land areas west of the Mississippi. This current of commerce had until this time been pent up, abruptly checked, and retarded, at the banks of the Father of Waters; but with the opening of the new bridge it had rushed over the river with a mighty torrent that in the eleven months from September 8, 1856, to

August 8, 1857, mounted to 12,586 freight cars and 74,179 passengers.

In these cross currents of the commerce of the nation was unfolded another tale of two cities; their hopes of greatness and their fears of rivals. St. Louis, long the mistress of the upper waters of the Mississippi, including the Missouri, saw in the new bridge an effort to make Chicago, already rapidly taking its place as a large and important city, the first city of the vast inland of America. The merchants of St. Louis were ready to back any argument that would end the flow of transportation that was going with rapidly increasing current over this bridge. Those who backed the railroad saw its tremendous advantage to Chicago, and, too, saw in this bridge the forerunner of scores of others that would make Chicago one of the great cities of the world. In the view of the St. Louis group the bridge was a menace to the mighty river traffic and should be prohibited by law; and the wreck of this boat was the final proof. From the Chicago viewpoint, as argued by Lincoln, those who would use the bridge for transportation east and west had the same rights as those who used the river for transportation north and south. It was even by inference suggested that the boatmen had by their carelessness if not by more deliberate means brought about the wreck and injury to the bridge at the sacrifice of the boat. Had there not been bonfires and great rejoicing at St. Louis and all along the river, when it was learned that the bridge was wrecked? Lincoln's contention that the commerce east and west was as rightful over the bridge as the commerce north and south down the river, prevailed to the extent that the jury was not able to agree that the railroad company was liable for

the damage done to the boat; nor was the right of transportation to roll in increasing volume to and from the west ever afterward seriously questioned.

The "Reaper Case" as it was called, tried in the United States District Court at Cincinnati in 1855, has been given much notice, not because of any noteworthy part Lincoln took in it, but because of some of the incidents that were connected with it. In this suit Cyrus H. McCormick brought action against John M. Manny and Company of Rockford, Illinois. He claimed that Manny had violated certain patents which he, McCormick, had obtained in the manufacture of reaping machines, which at the time he was turning out at an immense rate and with enormous profit. The Manny Company entering the same field had likewise secured patents and was manufacturing reaping machines on a large scale and to this extent reducing the profits of McCormick. If the latter's claim was valid, he held the exclusive right for the making of this machinery which was fast enabling the American farmer to make two blades of grass grow where only one had grown before, and in redoubling his output to redouble the McCormick profits. The exclusive right to supply this vast market carried with it the certainty of amassing fortunes such as had hardly been dreamed of. Here was a declaration of war that marked a new era. McCormick asked the court to restrain Manny from the further manufacture of these machines, and for the sum of four hundred thousand dollars for those which had already been manufactured and sold in violation of the rights thus claimed.

The vast amount of money involved meant of course the retaining of the most effective lawyers that were to

be found. From such litigants, the lawyer whose skill might open up this avenue of gold might ask without fear of refusal the price for his services. McCormick was represented by E. N. Dickerson and Reverdy Johnson, the first with a high knowledge of the mechanical principles connected with the machines to be considered, the other noted as one of the most brilliant lawyers of his day. Manny was represented by George Harding, Edwin M. Stanton and Abraham Lincoln. It is known that Harding was retained by reason of his close acquaintance with the mechanics involved in the suit, but there is no such certainty as to the other counsel in the case. To match the brilliance of Reverdy Johnson was no easy problem, and it would seem that the answer to it had been left open until the last moment.

The result was unfortunate in that it brought about a long standing feeling of irritation between two men,—both highly able and both highly ambitious, and who at a future day would be called upon to unite their high ability not merely to curb somewhat the already enormous acquisitions of an importunate seeker after gold, but to turn back treason, at high tide threatening the destruction of their nation.

This unity of effort the brusque and domineering Stanton might have rendered impossible, save for the infinite tact and the patience of Lincoln. The two men had little in common save a hatred of slavery, and even here there was a difference in degree that made them seem unlike. Stanton, like the Carthaginian Hannibal, had been sworn to his cause by his father in early childhood and with him it was a consuming fire; while with Lincoln there was the same steady patience and faith with which he ap-

proached most of the great questions that confronted the nation. Lincoln's powers were of slow growth, developing by impulse from within. Stanton had come to early maturity and had actually begun to practice law before he was of age. He held strong opinions where he held any opinions. His orthodox ideas of dress were violated when he had his first glimpse of the long, angular Lincoln, loose of joint, loose of clothes and heavy of boot, and with his usual outspokenness made some careless remark which perhaps was as variously reported to Lincoln as it has been to posterity. The fact that Stanton was chosen to make the argument against Reverdy Johnson would have probably been sufficient to depress Lincoln, even had no insult been added to injury, if there was an injury. It is understood that there had been no definite assurance as to the various parts the attorneys in the case were to take. And when there was an objection by the opposition to more than two speeches from the Manny side and it became a question of Stanton or Lincoln, Harding, well acquainted with Stanton's ability and friendly to him, decided in that gentleman's favor. It is likely that Lincoln had the manuscript of his speech in his pocket, as has often been said, just as it is likely that Stanton had his available; that was a part of the employment of each and for which they were paid. But whatever the smaller facts may have been, there is no doubt that Lincoln was a much disappointed man at the lack of consideration shown him, the lack of opportunity accorded him, or possibly both. He left Cincinnati with apparently no consoling thought save the fact that he was in possession of a two-thousand-dollar fee. Remembering the usual mildness of the temper of Lincoln and his

strong mastery over his emotions in the face of disappointments and irritations, there is something of the comic in his gloomy retreat from Cincinnati. Always he attached a feeling of resentment, even to the city itself. Back in the office at Springfield, he talked of the case speaking of Judge McLean as "an old granny." And to show the feebleness of his powers of observation, while admitting he had considerable vigor of mind, added: "If you were to point your finger at him and a darning needle at the same time, he never would know which was the sharper." Incidentally, McCormick lost the suit.

In the United States District Court at Springfield, April 17, 1856, Angle's research shows Lincoln in two suits which are noticeable because of the amounts involved. He represents the Chicago, Alton and St. Louis Railroad, the defendant; heard without a jury, the court finds the railroad indebted to Henry Hotchkiss in the sum of \$50,000, with damages at \$1,496.65. In the other, brought by Brown Bros. & Co., the debt was placed by the court at \$252,145, and the damages at \$5,379.03.

While few lawyers were so generally kindly and tolerant with opposing parties and witnesses, he could, when aroused, be very "hurtful in denunciation." Herndon tells that when he attacked meanness, fraud or vice, he was powerful, merciless in his castigation. Speaking of the Wright case, which they brought to compel a pension agent to refund a portion of a fee he had withheld from the widow of a Revolutionary soldier, he shows that after hearing the story of the old woman, crippled and bent with age, Lincoln was stirred up and walked over to the agent's office and made a demand for the return of the money, but without success. Then suit was brought.

“The day before the trial I hunted up for Lincoln, at his request, a history of the Revolutionary War, of which he had read a good portion. He told me to remain during the trial until I had heard his address to the jury. ‘For,’ said he, ‘I am going to skin Wright, and get that money back.’ The only witness we introduced was the old lady, who through her tears told her story. In his speech to the jury, Lincoln recounted the causes leading to the outbreak of the revolutionary struggle, and then drew a vivid picture of the hardships at Valley Forge, describing with minuteness the men, barefooted and with bleeding feet, creeping over the ice. As he reached that point of his speech wherein he narrated the hardened action of the defendant in fleecing the old woman of her pension, his eyes flashed and, throwing aside his handkerchief, which he held in his right hand, he fairly launched into him. His speech for the next five or ten minutes justified the declaration of Judge Davis, that he was ‘hurtful in denunciation and merciless in castigation.’ There was no rule of court to restrain him in his argument, and I never, either on the stump or on other occasions in court, saw him so wrought up. He brought his speech to a close, saying, ‘The soldier has gone to rest, and now, crippled, blinded and broken, his widow comes to you and to me, gentlemen of the jury, to right her wrongs. She was not always thus. She was once a beautiful young woman. Her step was as elastic, her face as fair and her voice as sweet as any that sang in the mountains of old Virginia. But now she is poor and defenceless. Out here on the prairies of Illinois, many hundreds of miles from the scenes of her childhood, she appeals to us, who enjoy the privileges achieved for us by the patriots of the Revolution,

for our sympathetic aid and manly protection. All I ask is, shall we befriend her.' The speech made the desired impression on the jury. Half of them were in tears, while the defendant sat in the court room, drawn up and writhing under the fire of Lincoln's fierce invective. The jury returned a verdict in our favor for every cent we demanded. When the judgment was paid, we remitted the proceeds to her and made no charge for our services."

On the 21st day of August, 1857, a man was struck two violent blows on his head, one in the front and the other in the back. The man died a few days later from the effects of these blows. He was a young man, rough, boisterous, and addicted to strong drink. His name was James Preston Metzker. In the usual course of events the violated law began to operate in the matter and two men were arrested and charged with the grave crime of murder. One of these men was James H. Norris and the other, William "Duff" Armstrong. These men, like the man who had been killed, were young, rough, boisterous, and addicted to liquor. It was charged that Norris and Armstrong at a place near Virgin's Grove, in Mason County, had inflicted mortal wounds upon the said James Preston Metzker and that from these wounds he died.

Because at the time of this killing a camp-meeting was being held at Virgin's Grove, and thereby much religious fervor had been aroused, it may be that there was much more resentment, and it may be that there was an added resentment because the place where the killing occurred was a place where liquor was being publicly sold as near to this camp-meeting as the law permitted, that is, one mile. Certainly there was much feeling aroused, and time

and place, are sometimes highly potent in such matters.

Other influences too, were to enter into the usual course of the Law's procedure at this point. And most powerful among these influences were to be one man's memories. Old, certainly, they were; half forgotten, mayhaps, they were: but now awakened, strange to say, all the more powerful, they were. These memories carried back over all the vicissitudes of a quarter of a century, when two young men matched their powerful muscles in wrestling there at New Salem, surrounded by a crowd of partisans, and urged on by two older men, one of whom, Bill Clary, of Clary's Grove, had bet the other, Denton Offut, the village merchant, that his man, Jack Armstrong, was a "better man" than Offut's man, Abe Lincoln. And there were other memories. Memories of how a few years later, this same Jack Armstrong and wife, Hannah, at the darkest period of the life of Abraham Lincoln, when the "Bludgeonings of chance," taking from him the only woman who had ever possessed his soul, and well-nigh his very reason as well, had nursed him back to life and the normal man's longing for life, though it may be doubted if they succeeded, quite, in giving him back the normal man's capacity for passionate love of woman. This had been buried there in the grave of Ann Rutledge.

In the ordinary course of the Law's procedure, some weeks later, the man James H. Norris, was tried before a jury of twelve men, sitting according to the manner and forms handed down to us through half a thousand years. The trial came to an end when these twelve men, after having heard other men who had been at the scene of the killing of Metzker tell their stories as to what had taken place at the time, and had heard much argument by

other men called lawyers as to what these stories meant, and had been instructed by the judge as to what this thing called the Law, meant, of which they had heard so much during the trial, left the room to consider together the meaning of the whole matter; and then, a short time thereafter returned to the court room, and one of their number read from a sheet of paper these momentous words, "We the jury find the defendant James H. Norris, guilty." Shortly after the arrest of "Duff" Armstrong, as he was called, his father, Jack Armstrong, had died. With almost his last breath he had told his wife, Hannah, "Sell everything you have and clear 'Duff.'" First of all, the wife had taken his body back to the old home, from which they had moved to Mason County, and there she had laid it in the old cemetery where lay also, the body of Ann Rutledge. Then she employed two local lawyers, who, realizing the bitter feeling that had been aroused by the killing of Metzker, secured a change of venue for Armstrong which caused the trial to take place in another county. Soon after she went to Springfield and asked the aid of Abraham Lincoln in saving her boy. Needless to say, this aid was promised.

In the usual course of the Law's procedure, some months after the conviction of the man, Norris, twelve other men, according to the same venerable forms, sanctioned by five hundred years of usage, sat at Beardstown to decide the fate of William "Duff" Armstrong. Mr. Lincoln had arrived the night before the trial. He had kept in touch with the other lawyers in the case and was familiar with the evidence as it had been brought out in the case of Norris. This fore-knowledge of the evidence that was to be given was a strong asset, but to this case Lincoln

brought one of much more weight, his memories. A thousand biographers have told their stories about this trial and the methods employed by Mr. Lincoln. They have told how he cross-examined the most important witness for the prosecution, a fellow by the name of Allen. This was the man who was relied upon to establish the identity of "Duff" Armstrong as the man who struck Metzker in the front of the head. He said that he was able to recognize Armstrong because the moon was shining brightly, and on further questioning, said the moon was high up in the heavens. They have applauded his sagacity in bringing before the jury an old almanac of the same period as the killing and showing thereby that the moon was not at the point testified to by the witness but was so low in the heavens that it could not have been shining on the spot of the killing as he had said. And some, too, have thought the thing the more sagacious because they have heard that the almanac produced was not of the identical period, but of another, in which the moon phase in question fitted better the purpose of the lawyer, in confuting the witness. Such doubts have been definitely set at rest, for thorough research has established the accuracy of the almanac rather than the witness. This research, however, had hardly been needed for the whole past of the man Lincoln was there to assure that he would not have employed so shallow a trick. And had he been willing to employ such questionable means, yet would he have been too shrewd to forget that the attorney for the prosecution would follow him in an argument for an hour or more, and before that would have probably verified the moon phases in some one of the many almanacs, which were to be found in almost every house at that

day, and so been prepared to demonstrate the falsity of so flimsy a forgery.

But it was not the shattering of the testimony of this witness on this point that gave a different result to the trial of Armstrong than that of Norris. That result came about because Abraham Lincoln, at that time the foremost man in the State of Illinois save only the one exception of Stephen A. Douglas, chose to draw from the inner recesses of his soul and lay before this jury the memories that had been buried therein for half a lifetime. As has been related by the prosecuting attorney in the case, J. Henry Shaw, "He told the jury of his once being a poor, friendless boy; that Armstrong's parents took him into their home, fed and clothed him and gave him a home. There were tears in his eyes as he spoke. The sight of his tall quivering frame, and the particulars of the story he so pathetically told, moved the jury to tears, and they forgot the guilt of the defendant in their admiration of the advocate. It was the most touching scene I ever witnessed."

The prosecuting attorney believed Armstrong guilty but no evidence he could present to that jury would stand against memories such as those which Abraham Lincoln engraved into their very souls. And so, according to those old forms of the law, this jury, having heard all from witnesses and all from lawyers and all from the judge, filed out of the room for a time, just as had that other jury in the trial of James Norris, but on its return the foreman read in a clear strong voice that carried to all parts of the room, "We the jury find the defendant, William 'Duff' Armstrong, not guilty."

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

IF FOR several years following his retirement from Congress, Lincoln delved more assiduously into law than had been his wont, it is not to be understood that in thus applying himself he had ceased to have an interest in things political. It may be doubted, indeed, whether he could have accomplished this divorce from politics even had he so desired. His was what might be termed a political mind. He loved and was interested in his fellows, singly and in mass, and so must have an abiding interest in whatever concerned them and their relations to each other.

It is probable that he had not yet solved the problem of his own course of action on the question that was dividing the land in twain. In his mind there was no abiding conviction of where lay the ultimate of right and wrong, at least as to the methods to be pursued. The less complex minds around him might quickly make their decisions on one phase or other of this matter of slavery. Lincoln himself had probably come to no decision other than that announced in his resolution with Dan Stone, given to the Illinois Legislature fifteen years earlier, "that the institution of slavery was founded on both injustice and bad policy," to which was added the assertion that

Congress had the power to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia. The very fullness of his investigations made for slower conclusions than most of his fellows, and the more impetuous of them became impatient with his conservatism in the midst of what was fast developing into a veritable maelstrom of passion.

At this period Herndon, an ardent Abolitionist, says: "I used to warn Lincoln against his apparent conservatism when the needs of the hour were so great;" but his only answer would be: "Billy, you're too rampant and spontaneous." Thus humorously did the senior partner reprove the junior. Always, the older man has a paternal attitude toward the younger, who to him is William or Billy, according to whether the humor is serious or light; or when spoken of to others, Herndon or Bill Herndon. But to the younger man the senior partner is always Mr. Lincoln. Continuing, Herndon, adds: "I was in correspondence with Sumner, Greeley, Phillips, and Garrison, and was thus thoroughly imbued with all the rancor drawn from such strong anti-slavery sources. I adhered to Lincoln, relying on the final outcome of his sense of justice and right. Every time a good speech on the great issue was made I sent for it. Hence you could find on my table the latest utterances of Giddings, Phillips, Sumner, Seward, and one whom I considered grander than all the others—Theodore Parker. Lincoln and I took such papers as the *Chicago Tribune*, *New York Tribune*, *Anti-Slavery Standard*, *Emancipator*, and *National Era*. On the other side of the question we took the *Charleston Mercury* and the *Richmond Enquirer*. I also bought a book called *SOCIOLOGY*, written by one Fitzhugh, which defended and justified slavery in every conceivable way. In addition I

purchased all the leading histories of the slavery movement, and other works which treated on that subject. Lincoln himself never bought many books, but he and I both read those I have named. After reading them we would discuss the questions they touched upon and the ideas they suggested, from our different points of view. I was never conscious of having made much of an impression on Mr. Lincoln, nor do I believe I ever changed his views. I will go further and say, that, from the profound nature of his conclusions and the labored method by which he arrived at them, no man is entitled to the credit of having changed or greatly modified them. I remember once, after having read one of Theodore Parker's sermons on slavery, saying to Mr. Lincoln substantially this: 'I have always noticed that ill-gotten wealth does no man any good. This is as true of nations as individuals. I believe that all the ill-gotten gain wrenched by us from the negro through his enslavement will eventually be taken from us, and we will be set back where we began.' Lincoln thought my prophecy rather direful. He doubted seriously if either of us would live to see the righting of so great a wrong; but years after, when writing his second Inaugural Address, he endorsed the idea. Clothing it in the most beautiful language, he says: 'Yet if God wills that it (the war) continue till all the wealth piled by the bondsman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn by the lash shall be paid by another drawn by the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, "The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."'

However much more deliberation Lincoln displayed

than those around him, these swiftly changing eddies in the main currents of the political thought of the nation were closely followed by him and probably more accurately evaluated than by those others. From a statement of John T. Stuart it is seen that as early as 1850 he had reached the point of decision. Stuart tells that as he and Lincoln were returning from court in Tazewell county in 1850, and were nearing the little town of Dillon, they engaged in a discussion of the political situation. "As we were coming down the hill, I said, 'Lincoln, the time is coming when we shall all have to be Abolitionists or Democrats.' He thought a moment and then answered, ruefully and emphatically, 'When that time comes my mind is made up, for I believe the slavery question can never be successfully compromised.'"

There seems no reason to believe that at this early period he had definitely outlined his own plans, save in the event of being forced to take one of the alternatives mentioned. He was still groping for a stronger lamp to light his pathway of action. Those others urged on by their passionate impulses need no such, but he must have the sanction of reason for his support, and so he continued to seek for an answer to this problem. The violence of the agitation at this period of 1850 had at least fixed his opinion against any compromise that would admit slavery into the territories and by that route into the new States as they entered the great national sisterhood composing the nation.

Already men in high places were talking without any lowering of voices of secession and disunion. California was at this time asking that she be admitted to the sisterhood of States. But in the constitution that she had adopted, at the very head of the Bill of Rights, appeared

this clause: "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, unless for the punishment of crimes, shall ever be tolerated in this State." And because of this clause those inside the national structure argued so fiercely that the new applicant could hardly get attention. Alexander Stephens, who had been his friend while Lincoln was in Congress, writes, December 5, 1849: "I find the feeling among the southern members for a dissolution of the Union—if the anti-slavery (measures) should be pressed to extremity—is becoming much more general than at first. Men are now beginning to talk of it seriously, who twelve months ago, hardly permitted themselves to think of it." Von Holst records: "Toombs,—according to his own assurances, was determined to maintain the struggle against the measure, even to the disruption of the Union." The same writer quotes Stephens, in order to resist the anti-slavery party, as "ready to go to all extremes with Toombs." Lincoln, Stephens and Toombs had but two years earlier been members of the "Young Indians," militant Whigs who fought in brotherhood in the ranks of that party and for the same candidate. Now, two of that three were ready to end the existence of the nation whose head they had been so largely instrumental in choosing. At this same session Duer, of New York, had called Meade, of Virginia, a liar for even denying that he was in favor of a dismemberment of the Union. By their attitude, two of the three former friends were doing much to bring the third out of the mists of uncertainty into the clear light of decision.

The bill by which California came into the Union as a free State was a most complicated piece of legislation that gave little reason for belief that a cure had been found for the violent controversy that had raged over the slave

question. Certainly, no great national principle had been announced or settled by it. For a brief period it allayed the violence of feeling aroused on issues that were in part temporary. Because of the number of these, Thomas H. Benton had in sarcasm termed it the "Omnibus Bill" and the aptness of the term has kept it so.

Besides the admission of California as a free State, it had provided for the formation of territorial governments in Utah and New Mexico, though with silence as to the question of slavery. There was a provision also for the adjustment of the boundary line between Texas and New Mexico, in which Benton charged that Texas had gained some seventy thousand square miles of land at the expense of the territory, which was of course just so much more land gained for the extension of slavery. To make more sure of the support of the Texans, the measure provided for the appropriation by Congress of several million dollars for the payment of certain vexatious debts of that State. Aside from these, the bill prohibited the slave trade in the District of Columbia, long a source of irritation. This was aggravated because large numbers of these slaves were corralled in an old livery stable in full view of the Capitol and there held for the buyers who came from the States of the far South and purchased large numbers for delivery in the cotton areas of that section.

Last and more important than any of these, not even excepting the admission of California, was a stringent Fugitive Slave Law. This the South had long demanded, and now got enough satisfaction out of to enable it to forget for a time the admission of the new free State. The results, however, were far from satisfactory, and actually dangerously hurtful. In the light of after events

it is clearly seen that this law, urged entirely to satisfy the slaveholders, in the end worked most largely to their undoing. Everywhere in the North bitter resentment followed attempts at its enforcement. While statesmen and serious thinkers of the North, including Lincoln, might readily agree that as long as the law of the land gave one human being the right to hold another human being as property, the law should protect that right, the enforcement of such a law was an entirely different proposition. However sound the technical basis of such a law might be, when its enforcement ran headlong counter to human nature it simply piled one bad law on top of another and rendered each the more intolerable.

For the first time some of the horrors and inhumanities of the slave system were brought immediately home to the masses of the northern people, heretofore too busy with their daily tasks to take more than a casual interest in the question. Now, the most ordinary impulse of human nature might, in any northern city, hamlet, or the open country, be the occasion for branding one a criminal. The deepest dictates of the human heart, the maxims of five thousand years of civilization, and the very essence of Christianity, must now be set aside. The story of the good Samaritan must be forgot. The acts which had through all the ages approved one noble, were now evoked to brand one a felon. A direction given a wayfarer, a cup of water to the thirsty, might be the decisive evidence to secure the conviction for crime. A year of this Fugitive Slave Law did more to arouse the North against the institution of slavery than ten years of the efforts of the abolitionists. For the first time the whole northern people were awakened to this monstrous anom-

aly fixed in the body politic of a land that called itself free.

Now at last was the great heart of the North made ready by trial to hear a new gospel of freedom. Not in the cold words of constitutions, but in a gospel made up of burning tears and heart sobs. A prophetess now came unto Israel. Ancient Israel had seen these in the old days, but never one who spoke like this woman. Daughter of a preacher, sister of a preacher, and wife of a preacher was this woman. The first, Lyman Beecher, the second, Henry Ward Beecher, the third, Calvin E. Stowe. But neither the father, nor brother, nor husband, would ever deliver a sermon like that in which Harriet Beecher Stowe poured forth her very soul in *UNCLE TOM'S CABIN*.

Cavilers ever since that day in 1852 in which this epochal book came from the press, have sought to invalidate its message. Often they mention improbabilities, and always for the purpose of defending those who committed the wrong of slavery, rather than shielding those who suffered the wrong of slavery. A strange perversion is this. These cavilers forget the substantial truth told by the whole book because they find something that appears improbable to them in an occasional line. This book so tremendously influenced the people of that day because it told so fully the truth about the subject it discussed, and about which no one else had dared to tell the full truth.

There were, and ever since have been others oversensitive lest some fancied kindlier features of the worst slave system that ever cursed the earth should be overlooked. Constantly they talk of loyalties of slaves to their masters. And some of these, against the open efforts of his mature life, would have us believe that Abraham Lincoln took

little or no interest in the wrongs of slavery, save when the country was on the eve of dissolution and war. So brilliant an authority as the late Albert Beveridge asserted that after expressing his opposition to slavery in the resolution in the Illinois Legislature in 1837, Lincoln did not interest himself in the question for some twenty years. The same authority shows astonishment at the loyalty which kept the slaves from rising against their masters during the war. The work of Albert Shaw, whose conclusions generally exhibit keen insight, shows the same tendency to error here. He speaks of the slaves who "were so bound by their sense of domestic attachment and loyalty to the superior class, upon whom they were dependent, that when the final test of war came they proved themselves the most devoted Southerners of any class whatever, in view of the facts and motives that might have provoked them to insurrection."

There is a natural feeling of reluctance in saying any word that would deprive a people, already deprived of so much, of tributes so fine as these, paid by the two brilliant gentlemen and by others less brilliant. But it is a dubious merit that is thus ascribed to them, and far inferior to the actual merit that should be allowed; that of native, common sense, which made the unschooled, unlettered men of color realize the folly of attempting an uprising (if any ever thought of it) when they were prohibited by the harshest of laws from the possession of any form of weapons; prohibited from assembling together even in small numbers; deprived even of the right to have religious instruction in groups, except under supervision of the masters; and prohibited from going from place to place unless in possession of a pass. Remembering these

conditions, and that writing was unknown to them (it being a crime even for the master to teach such), so that there was no means of communication except by word of mouth, and further that they had no vestige of organization, one marvels at the strange misapprehension that leads to such conclusions about a loyalty in not doing what even these untutored folk could well see could not be done.

Possibly this misconception of things is due to the failure to understand that slavery in the South was a different thing from the slavery of the ancients, where often, "the slave by birth was of equal dignity with his master," his servile condition being the result of the fortunes of war, and not infrequently "all classes were then upon a level in point of taste, sentiment and instruction." Nor was it like that in Hayti where the master class was very small, the country densely wooded with but few roads, and, of vastly more significance, where there was practically no central authority backed by effectual armed force.

Lincoln had given the subject much thought and, wiser by far than any of these gentlemen, saw nothing remarkable as to loyalty in these slaves, but only the practical impossibility of successfully accomplishing an uprising. And with the largest tolerance and fullest patience ever seen in an active man of affairs, there is yet a difficulty in restraining his sarcasm when referring to those who saw so little of bad and so much of good in the institution of slavery. "For although volume upon volume has been written to prove slavery a very good thing, we never heard of a man who wishes to take the good of it, by being a slave."

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

THE Democratic party had not been able to harmonize entirely its discordant northern and southern adherents but had much less of disorganization than the Whigs. When the election of November, 1852, came on, they secured an overwhelming victory, and Franklin Pierce received the electoral vote of all the States except Massachusetts, Kentucky, Tennessee and Vermont. With this success and with a man for President whose opinions fitted with their wishes for the enlargement of the slave limits, the pro-slave group lost no time pushing forward a program in line with their ideas. The outcome of the California fight was forgot, except that part like the Fugitive Slave Law which they had so much desired.

The next test of strength between the principles of freedom and slavery, so long in open opposition, and now engaged in a life and death struggle, was to come over the broad level lands lying west of the slave State of Missouri and the free State of Iowa, known as Nebraska, of which Kansas was a part.

In view of the recent elevation of Mr. Pierce, in a large measure, doubtless, because of views agreeable to the controlling group of the South, it is not surprising that Stephen A. Douglas, full of ambition and willing to pay

the price for its gratification, capable and vigorous, should seek to place himself in a favorable position for that honor at the next election. And how better could this be accomplished than by a stroke which more than anything else would ingratiate him to the powerful slave-holding group?

The Missouri Compromise, by which Henry Clay had stayed the earliest of the serious threats against the Union, in 1821, had allowed the admission of Missouri as a slave State, while further providing that all territory west and north of the southern boundary "should be forever free." It had thus formed a gigantic barrier shutting the rising tides of the slave population within, or nearly so, its original habitat, where it would be left as the founders of the Republic had expected it in the course of ultimate extinction. The result was not, however, as they had expected, and not as those who had put through this compromise expected. With the proposed admission of each new State there was a renewed outbreak over the question of whether such State should allow slavery within its limits, and with the trend of population toward the northwest, always this great barrier, the Missouri Compromise, stood marking the limits beyond which slavery could not go. After the admission of California as a free State, the pro-slave group became doubly anxious to see that others admitted should have no bar against their favorite form of property. They were willing to pay any price that might be demanded by the ambition of the bold political adventurer, if only this barrier might be removed that was crowding slavery more and more within its narrow limits. There were few among the first rank of northern statesmen who did not at one time or another have the

tempting prize of southern support for the Presidency dangled before their eyes. And not a few of them at different times made sharp shifts in their political attitudes that were ascribed to this temptation.

With the election of Franklin Pierce, the force of this temptation became the stronger as its effectiveness became more obvious. With Henry Clay dead, and no longer there to guard his most cherished accomplishment, the possibility of changing the old order of things appeared more probable. It is not surprising then that Douglas, chairman of the Committee on Territories, should attempt some such solution of the problem as would leave him in the good graces of the slave-holding group at the election of 1856. As chairman, he introduced a bill providing for a territorial government for Nebraska and Kansas which was quickly amended by providing for the separation of the two. This was due to the wishes of the slave-holding group, who saw more likelihood of carrying slavery into Kansas alone than into the larger area contained in the two sections, since that territory was immediately west of Missouri and in the same latitude as Kentucky and Virginia.

The new territories were in the area which the Missouri Compromise declared to be "forever free," but the Nebraska-Kansas bill contained a provision leaving it to the settlers to decide the question of slavery according to their own wishes. This of course, was contrary to the Missouri Compromise, but those who opposed the bill, including Lincoln, charged that the matter was made even worse by a later alteration in the proposed act which omitted a former provision by which any constitution adopted should be submitted to the people. This bill became a

law, May 30, 1854. Douglas had thus accomplished the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, and thereby had well earned the gratitude of the slaveholders. But whatever satisfaction he got from this source was greatly marred by the violent censure that came from his own and other northern States, and there is no doubt that Douglas was seriously alarmed at the hostile demonstrations in his own State.

It may not have been seen either by Douglas or any others at the time, but the most serious threat against the future ambitions of Douglas was the renewed activity of Lincoln in political affairs. This latter had seen in the Kansas-Nebraska bill with its repeal of the Missouri Compromise, a danger that called every friend of freedom to increased watchfulness and effort. No longer was there any uncertainty in Lincoln's mind as to his own course of action, and no longer was there any uncertainty in his course of action. The warfare between the two men, extending back for nearly twenty years, constant, personal and political, now became intensified. Behind the ordinary courtesies which each observed toward the other, there was little in the relations of these two distinguished citizens of the same small city except hostilities. There is wonder if behind the quarter of a century of these hostilities, with hardly a truce, there was not something more than a mere clash of ambitions or temperaments. There are no facts by which this question can be answered; all that is known is that between the two there was a conflict as irrepressible as that which separated the political principles for which each stood.

Following the signing of the Kansas-Nebraska bill, there was a veritable storm of condemnation for those

who had promoted it with the most of this aimed at Douglas, its chief proponent. Not the least of this storm area was found in Illinois. While the Senator did not return until September, the opposing forces in the State were busily engaged in uniting all who opposed the extension of slavery in a solid front against him. The coalescing of these various, hitherto discordant elements, which was seen not only in Illinois but in most of the other northern States, meant the earlier demise of the Whig party, which would soon pass from the stage of American politics.

He found condemnation everywhere. The abolitionists had become much more numerous as well as more bitter as a result of the Kansas-Nebraska bill. There was a revolt in his own party, and both in the newspapers and on the platform his opponents were using every possible argument that would apply against slavery to destroy him. Whatever the South might think, here at home there was nothing whatever of the Roman Consul returning for his triumphal entry. Doubtless he had been the largest factor in putting through the Congress this most fundamental change in American legislation seen in more than thirty years, but whatever applause followed this momentous accomplishment came from southern and not northern States. In these latter there was only grave apprehension or strong denunciation.

At Chicago where Douglas made his first speech he had an accompaniment of hisses and hooting. He was kept busy for some weeks conferring with and explaining his position to his friends. The construction he placed on his act and the results to be expected from this bill, drew many of his friends back to him. But there were others

who could never again look upon him with confidence. Now for the first time his enemies were showing a united front. Abolitionists, Whigs and Anti-Nebraska Democrats were being molded into one battle organization. More significant than this was the fact that all these diverse elements turned to one man for leadership, and that man was his enemy of twenty years. With him there could be no adjustment of differences. When Douglas made his next speech in defense of his action on the Kansas-Nebraska bill at Springfield, Lincoln was called upon to make a reply which he did the following evening. It is here then that we have an earlier edition of the debates so long to be remembered between these men. If contemporary mention is a trustworthy guide, the laurels of this debate belong to Lincoln rather than to the famous Senator. On October 16, 1854, Lincoln at Peoria again attacked the legislation fathered by Douglas. There is no fuller and franker contribution of clear reasoning on the various phases of slavery in America to be found than this. It is a long speech, some sixty pages, and its delivery took about three hours. Some of the things he said that day follow:

"I do not propose to question the patriotism or to assail the motives of any man or class of men, but rather to confine myself strictly to the naked merits of the question." Having thus opened up he proceeded to show slavery as a "monstrous injustice," and proceeded to explain that he had no prejudice against the southern people and did not consider them different from other people, adding: "We know that some southern men do free their slaves, go north and become tiptop Abolitionists, while some northern ones go south and become most cruel slave-

masters. When southern people tell us they are no more responsible for the origin of slavery than we are, I acknowledge the fact. When it is said that the institution exists, and that it is very difficult to get rid of in any satisfactory way, I can understand and appreciate the saying. I surely will not blame them for not doing what I should not know how to do myself. If all earthly power were given me, I should not know what to do as to the existing institution. My first great impulse would be to free all the slaves, and send them to Liberia to their own native land. But a moment's reflection would convince me that whatever of high hope (as I think there is) there may be in this in the long run, its sudden execution is impossible. If they were all landed there in a day, they would all perish in the next ten days; and there are not surplus shipping and surplus money enough to carry them there in many times ten days. What then? Free them all, and keep them among us as underlings? Is it quite certain that this betters their condition? I think I would not hold one in slavery at any rate, yet the point is not clear enough for me to denounce people upon.

"What next? Free them and make them politically and socially our equals? My own feelings would not admit of this, and if mine would, we well know that those of the great mass of the whites will not. Whether this feeling accords with justice and sound judgment is not the sole question, if indeed it is any part of it. A universal feeling, whether well or ill-founded, cannot be safely disregarded. We cannot then make them equals. It does seem to me that systems of gradual emancipation might be adopted, but for their tardiness in this I will not undertake to judge our brethren in the South."

The speaker then went on to show the repulsiveness of slavery by showing that all who made a business of bartering and selling Negroes were regarded with repulsion, and goes on to describe their methods and the results that follow: "He watches your necessities and crawls up to buy your slave, at a speculating price. If you cannot help it, you sell to him; but if you can help it, you drive him from your door. You despise him utterly. Your children must not play with his; they may rollick freely with the little Negroes, but not with the slave dealer's children. If you are obliged to deal with him, you try to get through the job without so much as touching him, instinctively shrinking from the snaky contact." Lincoln may not be describing the feeling of the whole slaveholding group, but he is showing his own horror and contempt for the slave-dealer.

Douglas, with his adroitness of mind and boldness of deception had talked much of "the sacred right of self-government." So the speaker goes on to say that this right depended on whether or not the Negro was to be considered as a man. "If he is not a man, in that case he who is a man may as a matter of self-government do just what he pleases with him. But if the Negro is a man, is it not to that extent a total destruction of self-government to say that he too shall not govern himself? When the white man governs himself, that is self government; but when he governs himself and also governs another man, that is more than self-government—that is despotism. If the Negro is a man, why, then, my ancient faith teaches me that 'All men are created equal,' and that there can be no moral right in connection with one man's making a slave of another. What I do say is that no man is good

enough to govern another man without that other's consent."

As to supplying a remedy, he said, first of all: "The Missouri Compromise ought to be restored. For the sake of the Union, it ought to be restored. We ought to elect a House of Representatives which will vote its restoration." Pointing to the decline in American citizenship, he said, with touching solemnity: "Little by little, but steadily as man's march to the grave, we have been giving up the old for the new faith. Nearly eighty years ago we began by declaring that all men are created equal; but now from that beginning we have run down to the other declaration that for some men to enslave others is a 'sacred right of self-government.' These principles cannot stand together. They are as opposite as God and Mammon; whoever holds to the one, must despise the other." He ended this speech in which he had held his audience for three hours with this caution, which in view of some of the desperate arguments of the slave orators that the lot of the slaves of the South was better than the workingmen of the North, was not so far-fetched: "Is there no danger to liberty itself in discarding the earliest practice and first precept of our ancient faith? In our greed-chase to make profit of the Negro, let us beware lest we 'cancel and tear to pieces' even the white man's charter of freedom."

So talked Lincoln, concerning slavery; talked intimately, directly, and without evasion. Only a man who had given it profound thought could have talked as he talked, and only a man who had been in close contact with the thing itself or with men who had known it first hand, could have talked as he talked.

It is to be remembered that this Peoria speech is almost the same speech that Lincoln made at Springfield following Senator Douglas. Of that speech which was not recorded, Herndon has given this enthusiastic account: "I frequently wrote the editorials in the Springfield *Journal*, the editor, Simeon Francis, giving to Lincoln and to me the utmost liberty in that direction. Occasionally Lincoln would write out matter for publication, but I believe I availed myself of the privilege oftener than he. The editorial in the issue containing the speeches of Lincoln and Douglas on this occasion was my own, and while in description it may seem rather strongly imbued with youthful enthusiasm, yet on reading it in maturer years I am still inclined to believe it reasonably faithful to the facts and the situation. 'The anti-Nebraska speech of Mr. Lincoln,' says the article, 'was the profoundest in our opinion that he has made in his whole life. He felt upon his soul the truths burn which he uttered, and all present felt that he was true to his own soul. His feelings once or twice swelled within, and came near stifling utterance. He quivered with emotion. The whole house was as still as death. He attacked the Nebraska bill with unusual warmth and energy; and all felt that a man of strength was its enemy, and that he intended to blast it if he could by strong and manly efforts. He was most successful, and the house approved the glorious triumph of truth by loud and continued huzzas. Women waved their white handkerchiefs in token of woman's silent but heartfelt assent. Douglas felt the sting; the animal within him was roused because he frequently interrupted Mr. Lincoln. His friends felt that he was crushed by Lincoln's powerful argument, manly logic, and illustrations from nature

around us. The Nebraska bill was shivered, and like a tree of the forest was torn and rent asunder by the hot bolts of truth. Mr. Lincoln exhibited Douglas in all the attitudes he could be placed, in a friendly debate. He exhibited the bill in all its aspects to show its humbuggery and falsehood, and, when thus torn to rags, cut into slips, held up to the gaze of the vast crowd, a kind of scorn and mockery was visible upon the face of the crowd and upon the lips of their most eloquent speaker. At the conclusion of this speech every man and child felt that it was unanswerable. He took the heart captive and broke like a sun over the understanding.’”

None could doubt this man's hatred of the institution of slavery and the different groups in Illinois that opposed its spread appear to have from that time recognized him as the foremost champion of their views. Nor was it long before in the nation at large he would be given front rank among those who saw in this anomaly a menace to the continued existence of the Union.

One result of this resentment against the measure just enacted was seen in the contest for United States Senator, into which Mr. Lincoln entered with his old time zest, although he had already been nominated for the State Legislature and was elected. The term of General James K. Shields was now near its end and the possibility of winning the place appeared good. With both the old parties seriously threatened with disruption, the chances for a new man to fill the place were high and not a few were making strong efforts to get it. Lincoln led in the first ballots, receiving at one time as high as forty-five votes, five short of the number needed to give a majority. On the ninth ballot, Governor Joel A. Mat-

teson to whom the Shields votes had been transferred received forty-seven ballots, while Lyman Trumbull, friend of Lincoln and who had been gaining while Lincoln's vote receded, received thirty-five. Trumbull was one of the group of younger Democrats who had rebelled against Douglas over the Kansas-Nebraska issue, while Matteson was favored by those who thought with Douglas. Seeing the likelihood that another Senator favorable to the pro-slavery group was about to be selected, Lincoln quickly induced his friends to swing their votes and on the next ballot Trumbull won the nomination with fifty-one votes to forty-seven for Matteson. Considerable bitterness of feeling resulted, since Trumbull was regarded as a traitor to his party, but the result of this election made it clear that the issue drawn on the slave question was now to be given more weight than mere party labels. Among the charges following this switch of Lincoln's votes, was that a bargain had been entered into between him and Trumbull. This was evidently due to the feeling then existing that there could be no crossing of party lines to give aid to political opponents. It was not yet realized that men were now fronted with a political question that weighed heavier than any party shibboleth. The party group that failed to realize this was doomed to extinction. On this question Lincoln's mind was made up. "The day of compromise has passed," as he said. "These two great ideas have been kept apart only by the most artful means. They are like two wild beasts in sight of each other, but chained and held apart. Some day these deadly antagonists will one or the other break their bonds, and then the question will be settled." He said to his old

friend Joseph Gillespie, speaking of slavery: "It is the most glittering, ostentatious, and displaying property in the world, and now, if a young man goes courting, the only inquiry is how many Negroes he or his lady-love owns. The love for slave property is swallowing up every other mercenary possession. Slavery is a great and crying injustice, an enormous national crime."

In a letter to Elihu Washburne, written the day following the election he talks of his defeat thus: "I regret my defeat moderately, but am not nervous about it. I could have headed off every combination, and been elected had it not been for Matteson's double game, and his defeat gives me more pleasure than my own gives me pain. On the whole it is perhaps well for our general cause that Trumbull is elected."

Almost prophetic is the last part of this statement. Had he been elected Senator at that time, it seems wholly unlikely that his rôle on the stage of the nation's history would have been equally heroic. And without that heroic role, a nation's glory might have been a nation's shame.

An incident occurring shortly after this election shows Lincoln facing one of the every-day possibilities of the slave system. Herndon tells that, "Some time after the election of Trumbull a young Negro, the son of a colored woman in Springfield known as Polly, went from his home to St. Louis and there hired as a hand on a lower Mississippi boat,—for what special service, I do not recollect,—arriving in New Orleans without what were known as free papers. Though born free he was subjected to the tyranny of the 'black code,' all the more stringent because of the recent utterances of the Abolitionists in

the North, and was kept in prison until his boat had left. Then, as no one was especially interested in him, he was forgotten. After a certain length of time established by law, he would inevitably have been sold into slavery to defray prison expenses had not Lincoln and I interposed our aid. The mother came to us with the story of the wrong done her son and induced us to interfere in her behalf. We went first to see the Governor of Illinois, who, after patient and thorough examination of the law, responded that he had no right or power to interfere. Recourse was then had to the Governor of Louisiana, who responded in like manner. We were sorely perplexed. A second interview with the Governor of Illinois resulting in nothing favorable, Lincoln rose from his chair, hat in hand, and exclaimed with some emphasis: 'By God, Governor, I'll make the ground in this country too hot for the foot of a slave, whether you have the legal power to secure the release of this boy or not.' Having exhausted all legal means to recover the Negro we dropped our relations as lawyers to the case. Lincoln drew up a subscription-list, which I circulated, collecting funds enough to purchase the young man's liberty. The money we sent to Col. A. P. Fields, a friend of ours in New Orleans, who applied it as directed, and it restored the prisoner to his overjoyed mother."

On August 24, 1855, there is a letter to his old friend, Joshua F. Speed, and replying to some argument of Speed, who is a slave-holder, he says: "I confess I hate to see the poor creatures hunted down and caught and carried back to their unrequited toil; but I bite my lips and keep quiet. In 1841, you and I had a rather tedious low-water trip on the steamboat from Louisville to St. Louis. You

may remember as well as I do, that from Louisville to the mouth of the Ohio there were on board ten or a dozen slaves shackled together with irons. That sight was a continued torment to me; and I see something like it every time I touch the Ohio or any slave border. It is not fair for you to assume that I have no interest in a thing which has, and continually exerts the power of making me miserable. You ought rather to appreciate how much the great body of the northern people do crucify their feelings in order to maintain their loyalty to the Constitution and the Union. I do oppose the extension of slavery, because my judgment and feeling so prompt me; and I am under no obligations to the contrary. If for this you and I must differ, differ we must."

Thus does this man show how deeply had been graven in his mind this tragedy which he saw some fourteen years before. This is the second time he has written about the thing. How sensitive to pain is his soul! Doubtless many others were there in full view of this same scene that still is seared indelibly on his brain. But being there and having eyes, they saw not; and being there and having ears, they heard not.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

LINCOLN began his political career as a Whig and he had been a consistent party man. Early in the year of 1856, it became so evident that this party could not adjust itself to the conditions brought about by the question of slavery, that it was necessary for him to make a new political adjustment. It was obvious that the Whig party was fast approaching a stage of utter desuetude and that its partisans must seek some other bark if they would navigate the political sea.

Herndon, his buoyant young partner, steeped with the virus of abolitionism, as he was, but strong in the belief that the older member of the firm was destined for great things, appears to have been instrumental in finding this bark on which they were to sail future political waters. That he chose another than the Abolitionist party as the most serviceable for transporting the high destiny of his chosen chieftain, clearly demonstrates his keen political acumen. This young man had in a higher degree than Lincoln the faculty of quick decision. That on this occasion he led in the direction he did, instead of toward the abolitionists, may indicate that he gave more weight toward finding a fit vessel for his partner's political ambitions than merely satisfying his own inclinations.

He relates that "finding himself drifting about with the disorganized elements that floated together after the angry political waters had subsided, it became apparent to Lincoln that if he expected to figure as a leader he must take a stand himself. Mere hatred of slavery and opposition to the injustice of the Kansas-Nebraska legislation were not all that was required of him. He must be a Democrat, Abolitionist, Know-Nothing or Republican, or float forever about in the great political sea without compass, rudder or sail. At length he declared himself. Believing the times were ripe for more advanced movements, in the spring of 1856 I drew up a paper for friends of freedom to sign, calling a county convention in Springfield to select delegates for the forthcoming Republican state convention in Bloomington. The paper was freely circulated, and generously signed. Lincoln was absent at the time; and, believing I knew what his feelings and judgment on the vital questions of the hour were, I took the liberty to sign his name to the call. The whole was then published in the *Springfield Journal*. No sooner had it appeared than John T. Stuart, who, with others, was endeavoring to retard Lincoln in his advanced movements, rushed into our office, and excitedly asked 'if Lincoln had signed that Abolition call in the *Journal*?' I answered in the negative, adding that I had signed his name myself. To the question, 'Did Lincoln authorize you to sign it?' I returned an emphatic 'No.' 'Then,' exclaimed the startled and indignant Stuart, 'you have ruined him.' But I was by no means alarmed at what others deemed hasty and inconsiderate action. I thought I understood Lincoln thoroughly, but in order to vindicate myself if assailed, I immediately

sat down, after Stuart had rushed out of the office, and wrote Lincoln, who was then in Tazewell county, attending court, a brief account of what I had done and how much stir it was creating in the ranks of his conservative friends. If he approved or disapproved my course, I asked him to write or telegraph me at once. In a brief time came his answer: 'All right. Go ahead. Will meet you radicals and all.' Stuart subsided, and the conservative spirits who hovered around Springfield no longer held control of the political fortunes of Abraham Lincoln."

This was a period when the public feeling was tense in the last degree over the bloody conflicts between slavery and anti-slavery men in Kansas, where this question had brought on actual civil war in which was seen on a smaller scale that which ere long would fall to the nation itself. Elsewhere there were ominous threats and assaults; even in the Senate of the United States Charles Sumner had been brutally beaten, and here in Lincoln's home state, Paul Selby, a newspaper man had been seriously wounded. The call for a state convention had been issued as already stated, to meet at Bloomington, May 29, 1856. This call had been directed to all who were opposed to the extension of slavery. This broad foundation would admit all the varied elements that were opposed to slavery. There at Bloomington was John M. Palmer, a former Democrat, alienated by Douglas' Kansas-Nebraska Act, and Lyman Trumbull, whom we have seen elected Senator by the aid of Lincoln. Owen Lovejoy, Abolitionist, was there, bravely carrying on with fierce zeal the work for which his brother, Elijah, gentler by far than he, had given his life. There too, was Colonel

William H. Bissell, he who had answered the challenge of Jefferson Davis by accepting and choosing the weapons, "muskets loaded with ball and buck shot." Whereat there was no duel, for even this dangerous near-pastime of the southern gentlemen of that day could be made too dangerous. Others were there who had before been reputable Whigs or Democrats or Abolitionists. From all parties and shades of parties they had come, but each actuated by a righteous hatred of slavery. Of course there were many able speakers present and not a few of the speeches made there at Bloomington were notable. But the one speech that fixed itself in the minds of all was the speech made by Abraham Lincoln.

By a strange prank of fortune there is no record of this speech which was made before a large audience in which there were many reporters, some of whom were adepts at shorthand, still a new art in the west, and who were there to report that speech. Too, there were many lawyers in the audience many of them in favorable positions, and among the younger ones several who made a practice of taking close notes in matters of this kind. Herndon was there, but after a few minutes became too absorbed in what was being said to record it as was his usual practice.

Joseph Medill was there for the purpose of reporting the convention and, of course, the important speeches. Of this one he states: "It was my journalistic duty, though a delegate to the convention, to make a 'long hand' report of the speeches delivered, for the *Chicago Tribune*. I did make a few paragraphs of what Lincoln said in the first eight or ten minutes, but I became so absorbed in his magnetic oratory that I forgot myself and ceased

to take notes; and joined with the convention in cheering and stamping and clapping to the end of his speech. I well remember that after Lincoln sat down and calm had succeeded the tempest, I walked out of a sort of hypnotic trance, and then thought of my report for the *Tribune*. There was nothing written but an abbreviated introduction. It was some sort of satisfaction to find that I had not been 'scooped,' as all the newspaper men present had been equally carried away by the excitement caused by the wonderful oration and had made no report or sketch of the speech."

Then he described the scene and his impressions generally: "Mr. Emery, a 'free-state' man just from 'bleeding Kansas,' told of the 'border ruffian' raids from Missouri upon the free-state settlers in Kansas; the burnings, robberies, and murders they were then committing; and asked for help to repel them. When he finished, Lincoln was vociferously called for from all parts of Major's large hall. He came forward and took the platform beside the presiding officer. At first his voice was shrill and hesitating. There was a curious introspective look in his eyes, which lasted for a few moments. Then his voice began to move steadily and smoothly forward, and the modulations were under perfect control from thenceforward to the finish. He warmed up as he went on, and spoke more rapidly; he looked a foot taller as he straightened himself to his full height, and his eyes flashed fire; his countenance became wrapped in intense emotion; he rushed along like a thunderstorm. He prophesied war as the outcome of these aggressions, and poured forth hot denunciations upon the slave power. The convention was kept in an uproar, applauding and cheering and

stamping; and this reacted on the speaker, and gave him a tongue of fire. The thrilling scene in that old Bloomington hall forty years ago arises in my mind as vividly as the day after its enactment.

"There stood Lincoln in the forefront, erect, tall, and majestic in appearance, hurling thunderbolts at the foes of freedom, while the great convention roared its endorsement! I never witnessed such a scene before or since. As he described the aims and aggressions of the unappeasable slaveholders and the servility of their northern allies as illustrated by the perfidious repeal of the Missouri Compromise two years previously, and their grasping after rich prairies of Kansas and Nebraska, to blight them with slavery and to deprive free labor of this rich inheritance, and exhorted the friends of freedom to resist them to the death, the convention went fairly wild. It paralleled or exceeded the scene in the Revolutionary Virginia convention of eighty-one years before, when Patrick Henry invoked death if liberty could not be preserved, and said, 'After all we must fight.' Strange, too, that this same man received death a few years afterwards while conferring freedom on the slave race and preserving the American Union from dismemberment."

Henry C. Whitney, one of the lawyers of the circuit with Lincoln and a close friend, who appears to have been with him very frequently for some weeks prior to the Bloomington convention, had thus gained some knowledge of the general argument of the speech before its delivery, and added to this knowledge by making some notes during the course of its delivery. On this basis when it was found that Mr. Lincoln had not put his speech in writing, Whitney, after going over the

question as to what the speech contained with others who heard it, later reconstructed it with probably sufficient accuracy to let its general features be seen and the argument known.

It is highly improbable that this restoration has given us the speech in its entirety, either of verbiage or thought, but there can be no doubt as to the tremendous effect of the speech. For those who heard it, Abraham Lincoln became at once the man of the hour. Of the many distinguished men there gathered, he was from that time the man pre-eminent. From that day the new Republican party was fully launched in the State of Illinois and under leadership that was not henceforth to be questioned.

In after years Lincoln was to make a number of speeches which among all civilized peoples would receive the applause of those most able to gauge merit in such matters; some of these speeches have been ranked with the supreme masterpieces of eloquence, taken from every age and every land, ancient and modern; many of those who were there at Bloomington lived to hear these later and lauded masterpieces. But among those who were thus fortunate there were some who, conceding every excellence to his later speeches, continued to maintain that the greatest speech ever delivered by Abraham Lincoln, was that made at Bloomington, sometimes called the 'Lost Speech.'

Some parts of this speech as recalled by Mr. Whitney are here given: "We come—we are here assembled together—to protest as well as we can against a great wrong, and to take measures, as well as we now can, to make that wrong right; to place the nation, as far as it may be possible now, as it was before the repeal of

the Missouri Compromise; and the plain way to do this is to restore the Compromise, and to demand and determine that Kansas shall be free! While we affirm, and reaffirm, if necessary, our devotions to the principles of the Declaration of Independence, let our practical work here be limited to the above. We know that there is not a perfect agreement of sentiment here on the public questions which might be rightfully considered in this convention, and that the indignation which we all must feel cannot be helped; but all of us must give up something for the good of the cause. There is one desire which is uppermost in the mind, one wish common to us all—to which no dissent will be made; and I counsel you earnestly to bury all resentment, to sink all personal feeling, make all things work to a common purpose in which we are united and agreed about, and which all present will agree is absolutely necessary—which must be done by any rightful mode if there be such. Slavery must be kept out of Kansas! The test—the pinch—is right there. If we lose Kansas to freedom, an example will be set which will prove fatal to freedom in the end. We, therefore, in the language of the Bible, must ‘lay the axe to the root of the tree.’ Temporizing will not do longer; now is the time for decision—for firm, persistent, resolute action.

“We have made a good beginning here today. As our Methodist friends would say: ‘I feel it is good to be here.’ While extremists may find some fault with the moderation of our platform, they should remember that ‘the battle is not always to the strong, nor the race to the swift.’ In grave emergencies, moderation is generally safer than radicalism; and as this struggle is likely to be

long and earnest, we must not, by our action, repel any who are in sympathy with us in the main, but rather win all that we can to our standard. We must not belittle nor overlook the facts of our condition—that we are new and comparatively weak, while our enemies are entrenched and relatively strong. They have the administration and the political power; and, right or wrong, at present they have the numbers. Our friends who urge an appeal to arms with so much force and eloquence, should recollect that the government is arrayed against us, and that the numbers are now arrayed against us as well; or, to state it nearer to the truth, they are not yet expressly and affirmatively for us; and we should repel friends rather than gain them by anything savoring of revolutionary methods. As it now stands, we must appeal to the sober sense and patriotism of the people. We will make converts day by day; we will grow strong by calmness and moderation; we will grow strong by the violence and injustice of our adversaries. And, unless truth be a mockery and justice a hollow lie, we will be in the majority after a while, and then the revolution which we will accomplish will be none the less radical from being the result of pacific measures. The battle of freedom is to be fought out on principle. Slavery is a violation of the eternal right. We have temporized with it from the necessities of our condition, but as sure as God reigns and school children read, **THAT BLACK FOUL LIE CAN NEVER BE CONSECRATED INTO GOD'S HALLOWED TRUTH!**—

“I will not say that we may not sooner or later be compelled to meet force by force; but the time has not yet come, and if we are true to ourselves, may never come.

Do not mistake that the ballot is stronger than the bullet. Therefore, let the legions of slavery use bullets; but let us wait patiently till November, and fire ballots at them in return; and by that peaceful policy, I believe we shall ultimately win. . . . The Union is undergoing a fearful strain; but it is a stout old ship, and has weathered many a hard blow, and 'the stars in their courses,' aye, an invisible power, greater than the puny efforts of men, will fight for us. But we ourselves must not decline the burden of responsibility, nor take counsel of unworthy passions. Whatever duty urges us to do or to omit, must be done or omitted; and the recklessness with which our adversaries break the laws, or counsel their violation, should afford no example for us. Therefore, let us revere the Declaration of Independence; let us continue to obey the Constitution and the laws; let us keep step to the music of the Union. Let us draw a cordon, so to speak, around the slave States, and the hateful institution, like a reptile poisoning itself, will perish by its own infamy. (Applause.)

"But we cannot free men if this is, by our national choice, to be a land of slavery. Those who deny freedom to others, deserve it not for themselves; and, under the rule of a just God, cannot long retain it. (Loud applause.)

"The conclusion of all is, that we must restore the Missouri Compromise. We must highly resolve that Kansas must be free! (Great applause.) We must reinstate the birthday promise of the Republic; we must reaffirm the Declaration of Independence; we must make good in essence as well as in form Madison's avowal that 'the word slave ought not to appear in the Constitution'; and

we must even go further, and decree that only local law, and not that time-honored instrument, shall shelter a slave-holder. We must make this a land of liberty in fact, as it is in name. But in seeking to attain these results—so indispensable if the liberty which is our pride, and boast shall endure—we will be loyal to the Constitution and to the ‘flag of our Union,’ and no matter what our grievance—even though Kansas shall come in as a slave State; and no matter what their’s—even if we shall restore the Compromise—WE WILL SAY TO THE SOUTHERN DISUNIONISTS, WE WON’T GET OUT OF THE UNION AND YOU SHAN’T!!! (This was the climax; the audience rose to its feet en masse, applauded, stamped, waved handkerchiefs, threw hats in the air, and ran riot for several minutes. The arch-enchanter who wrought this transformation looked, meanwhile, like the personification of political justice.)

“But let us, meanwhile, appeal to the sense and patriotism of the people, and not to their prejudices; let us spread the floods of enthusiasm here aroused all over these vast prairies, so suggestive of freedom. Let us commence by electing the gallant soldier Governor (Colonel) Bissell, who stood for the honor of our State alike on the plains and amidst the chaparral of Mexico and on the floor of Congress, while he defied the southern Hotspur; and that will have a greater moral effect than all the border ruffians can accomplish in all their raids on Kansas. There is both a power and a magic in popular opinion. To that let us now appeal; and while, in all probability, no resort to force will be needed, our moderation and forbearance will stand us in good stead when if ever WE MUST MAKE AN APPEAL TO BATTLE AND TO THE

GOD OF HOSTS!!” (Immense applause and a rush for the orator.)

It will be noticed that in the reported version of this speech at Bloomington there are several direct references to war as the ultimate outcome of slavery in America. Such conclusions were being frequently voiced in the South by the foremost men, but among the statesmen of the North such thoughts were still being left unspoken. The more thoughtful men in that section felt that the very mention of the dread possibility of war was in its tendency an incitement to war. A man, then, and especially one in high esteem with the people was apt to be regarded as dangerous and irresponsible, who made mention of the harsh word which even the more stupid saw as describing that which was now something more than an early possibility. There is reason to believe, then, that here in these unusually frank allusions to the possibilities of appeal to armed force, is seen the reason for the loss of this speech, or as some have intimated, its suppression. Mr. Medill on this possibility has said:

“My belief is, that after Mr. Lincoln cooled down, he was rather pleased that his speech had not been reported, as it was too radical in expression on the slavery question for the digestion of central and southern Illinois at that time, and that he preferred to let it stand as a remembrance in the minds of his audience. But be that as it may, the effect of it was such on his hearers that he bounded to the leadership of the new Republican party of Illinois, and no man afterwards ever thought of disputing that position with him. On that occasion he planted the seed which germinated into a Presidential candidacy and that gave him the nomination over Seward

at the Chicago convention in 1860, which placed him in the Presidential chair, there to complete his predestined work of destroying slavery and making freedom universal, but yielding his life as a sacrifice for the glorious deeds."

A few weeks later the Republican party opened its convention in Philadelphia. The result of the balloting there gave John C. Fremont the nomination for President, and William L. Dayton for vice-President. Among those mentioned for this latter office was Abraham Lincoln. Now is it seen that this man's fame has spread beyond the boundaries of Illinois.

Two weeks earlier the Democratic convention had sat at Cincinnati. There the balloting had been very spirited and the prize of the nomination for President had been given to James Buchanan. President Pierce, had been beaten, despite his large patronage, and Stephen A. Douglas, had been beaten, despite his immense popularity with the South, because of his activity in the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. The failure of these two had resulted from their close connection with the Kansas-Nebraska Act. The Whig party, waning but with past prestige and still with sufficient following to be a factor in any national question had nominated Millard Fillmore, ex-President. Buchanan was elected. The new Republican party had made a strong race and had carried enough States to make it certain that slavery was now to be taken as an institution with an uncertain future. The Democratic party, with the full support of the pro-slavery group, had won the election, but by a minority vote. With the exception of Pennsylvania, Illinois and Indiana all the northern States had been carried by the

new party. In Illinois, too, the slaveholding group won only with a minority vote. What Lincoln had anxiously anticipated came to pass, the voters had scattered their votes between the two candidates who represented the opposition to slavery and thereby both had lost. Of the vote cast, Buchanan received 105,344, Fremont, 96,180 and Fillmore, 37,451. Now was it seen everywhere in the land that the opposition to slavery was threatening to take control of the Republic.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

PRESIDENT BUCHANAN'S first official utterance was one in which he felicitated the nation that by the application of a simple rule, "the will of the majority shall govern the settlement of the question of domestic slavery in the Territories." Then he quoted from the legislation repealing the Missouri Compromise that part which had been characterized by Senator Benton as a "stump speech injected into the belly of the act," and which said "Congress is not to legislate slavery in any Territory or State, nor to exclude it therefrom, but to leave the people thereof perfectly free to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States."

How often did the men of that day who trafficked in slaves dictate to their agents the words free, and freedom, and liberty. As the new President viewed it, "the people having proclaimed their will, the tempest at once subsided." Verily, this prophet sees but darkly into the future, for soon will there be such tempests as this western continent never saw. He who was blind had been called upon to lead the blind. And yet this man, Buchanan, had all the knowledge that long years of varied and extended experience could supply. It is to be doubted

if any man who ever sat as President brought to the office so wide an experience in statecraft.

Some three days after the prophet had thus spoken, the Sanhedrin, itself, the Supreme Court of the United States speaks. And though in this case of *Dred Scott vs. John F. A. Sandford*, it speaks in a tongue unknown to the Fathers of the Republic, it speaks with final authority. For some three years this court has had this case before it and now at last makes known its conclusions. These conclusions are set forth to the extent of some hundred pages. One is not supposed to have opinions after the oracle has spoken, and so from that day to this the books, whether in the schools or otherwise, have had little to say that might be worthwhile by reason of frankness concerning the conclusions announced at that time. At this distant day it may be permissible to speak above a whisper concerning the findings made by the court in the case mentioned.

It is not a little strange that so much time and study was given to the Declaration of Independence by the venerable judges. One would have thought that in finding a defence for a man who desired to deprive another of his freedom, that would be the last document to call in aid. And yet that is just what the subtle judges of the highest court in the land accomplished by a certain legal legerdemain. Jefferson, who had put the very essence of his being into the Declaration of Independence, would never have known the thing that the Chief Justice of the United States construed it to be. All the noble idealism that had made this historic document possibly the longest step upward toward the heights of freedom, was entirely expunged from it by the casuistry and pro-

digious verbosity of the aged Roger B. Taney. The highest judicial authority of a nation that had started its career proclaiming to the world the words freedom and equality, had sunk to the role of an attorney for one who would enslave his fellow, and to accomplish this had construed the immortal document written by Jefferson as a mere slaveholder's title paper.

Now, indeed, were the lights of liberty gone out, and the utter darkness of slavery was over all this American land. In the Senate, Stephen A. Douglas had extinguished one; in the White House, James Buchanan had extinguished one; and now Taney, with a veritable deluge of words, extinguished the other and last by making the Declaration of Independence, mightiest challenge to tyranny ever uttered in the world, a mere claim of privilege for a little group and its kind. No greater sacrilege had been perpetrated in any land or in any age in the name of justice.

A State may, like an individual, have its exalted and its base periods. There may be some question as to whether America reached her highest moral point at an earlier or a later period; but certain it is this decision handed down by Justice Taney marks exactly the lowest moral level ever reached by the government of the United States of America. For the first time the three departments of the government, the legislative, the executive and the judicial are seen in equal obloquy.

This case had commenced on November 2, 1853, when Dred Scott's attorney, R. F. Field, filed in the clerk's office of the Circuit Court of the United States for the District of Missouri, his declaration against the defendant, John F. A. Sandford. Under the ancient legal form of

trespass, it was told to the court in the quaint verbiage handed down through centuries of English legal procedure, that Dred Scott "complained of the wrong" done him by Sandford, in restraining him as a slave and in restraining his wife and children as slaves, and fixed his damages at two thousand five hundred dollars on this account, and "for other wrongs then and there done him by the said John F. A. Sandford," five hundred dollars, making his suit for three thousand dollars damage.

It was shown in the course of the case that Scott had been a slave at St. Louis, and that he had been taken to Rock Island in Illinois; that he had married during his residence of four years at that place, and that two children had been born of the marriage, one in Illinois and the other after his return to Missouri. Scott's claim to freedom was based on the fact that his master had taken him into a free State and there established a permanent residence. In that day this was generally considered as giving a ground for claiming freedom, the immediate precedent for which had been a case in which a slave from the Barbadoes Island taken to England, had been adjudged free by Justice Lord Mansfield. This case of Somerset had considerable weight in the American States up to this time, though it was tried in 1770.

Chief Justice Taney, refusing to recognize the analogy of this and the Somerset case, or to indicate that he had ever heard of the same, plunged deeply into the intent that had been in the minds of the Fathers of the Republic when they had evolved the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States. Basing his findings, not on the language which they put into these instruments, but rather on their language largely con-

strued by certain of their actions, he decided that they could not have had black or colored men in mind when in the one instrument there was mention of "certain unalienable rights and that among these, are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Four people were sent back into slavery and for the reason, as the court tells the world, that Dred Scott could not bring a suit in the courts because he was not, as he announced himself in his declaration against Sandford, a citizen of Missouri. In the view of Justice Taney, the men who had spoken in the Declaration of Independence and in the Constitution of the United States, had not meant him to be a citizen, regardless of what they had asserted in their famous documents. And further, for some like reason, and because of certain, apparently to him, sacred clauses in the Constitution as to property rights, the court declared that Congress had no right to prohibit slavery anywhere in the United States; at least that was the effect of the opinion handed down.

It was clear then in the mind of Justice Taney that Scott could never have obtained his freedom, nor that of his wife, nor that of his children, by residence of any period, in a free State. This was so, though all men for more than thirty-seven years had believed that that State had been reserved for freemen, and that it had been specifically declared to be "forever free." To other men who had made some study of the case and the surrounding circumstances, this reasoning was never satisfactorily clear. The only thing which appeared clear to them was that the slave oligarchy was at last definitely possessed of the courts, along with the Congress and the

Presidency of the United States. Among the men who tended to this belief, was Abraham Lincoln.

Within a period now of six years, the slaveholding group had won four great victories: The Fugitive Slave Act, the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, the Kansas-Nebraska Act, and this Dred Scott case. And yet these victories had been so dearly bought that had they seen the full consequences it may be doubted if there had been any elation whatever. They were the kind of victories that tend to ruin the victors more surely than they do the vanquished; victories like that of Bonaparte at Borodino, or Marlborough at Malplaquet, or like that which caused Pyrrhus after Asculum to remark: "Another such victory, and we are lost."

Lincoln, who had long believed that some adjustment of this question might be found in compromise that would allow for a gradual emancipation, probably did not cease entirely to hope for such a solution until this decision of Judge Taney's. From that day he began to believe that the nation was headed toward an armed conflict. It was about this time that he laconically flayed the title to slave ownership with this legalistic observation: "It is singular that the courts would hold that a man never lost his right to his property that had been stolen from him, but that he instantly lost his right to himself if he was stolen."

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

WHILE Lincoln had failed in the attempt to succeed to the senatorial office that had been held by James K. Shields, he had by no means thrown aside the thought. With the extraordinary show of strength made by the newly organized Republican party in Illinois, he readily sees that with his predominant place in that party he is in a favorable position to attain that office. It is no difficult matter to get the party nomination, for no one questions his leadership here in Illinois and there is but one obstacle between him and the place. But as that obstacle happens to be Stephen A. Douglas, who is near the close of his second term, it can be seen that Lincoln's desire will not be easily attained.

There are some conditions that make the chances better for the man who aspires for the place, for the Buchanan administration is much incensed at Douglas since the latter's blunt refusal to march with the administration forces in the late Lecompton Constitution matter. The *Union*, organ of the administration, is daily printing column articles there at Washington to show why the Democrats in Illinois should not support Douglas, and is urging them to give their support to Judge Sydney Breese.

For Douglas there has been no formal nomination.

What need is there for these little formalities? Does he not always speak of "my party" when referring to Democracy in Illinois? However, no longer do the Senator's recommendations pass current at the White House. Here in Illinois, the postmasters and other Federal functionaries are in a dreadful plight, since it is exceedingly difficult to worship these two masters—Buchanan, President of the United States and giver of all good things, and Stephen A. Douglas, who before these evil days had been the chief priest at that shrine. So it happens that Douglas goes forth to battle for his toga with Democratic enemies in his rear, headed by the President himself, and with Republican enemies in front and at their head Abraham Lincoln, and with him Senator Lyman Trumbull. These two are opponents that even Douglas must respect. Some say they are the best debaters in the Republican party, with the possible exception of Seward.

Starting from the year 1834, the paths of Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas had wound onward and upward, if not in parallel lines at least so close together and for so long a time as to become a thing extraordinary, and probably not to be seen again in the history of the American nation. At that time both were young men, Douglas, just at the age of manhood, and Lincoln but four years older. Neither were helped nor possibly hindered with capital, other than high spirit, largeness of mental capacity, keen common sense, and tireless ambition.

Then they met at Vandalia, at that time the State Capital. Lincoln was there to take his seat as member of the Legislature, for the first time, and Douglas, planning the same objective, would attain it two years later. The goals

sought after by the two men were so often similar, if not the same, it might be assumed that the two had much in kind. This however was far from accurate. They were both, however, habitual office seekers.

Lincoln with the earlier start had chosen the Whig party. This was not the thing that could have been expected, since even at that early day it was the Democratic party that was more largely allied with the aims of the men of the South, and Lincoln was by birth one of these. Then too, the community in which he commenced his political career was largely Democratic, and most of his friends. Aside from this, that party was not only in power but had at its head at Washington a man who was the idol of the masses and of the youthful, a man of destiny. Andrew Jackson, himself one of the masses, high of spirit and high of ambition, would have, it seems, drawn a young man of these same masses, who if poor, was yet possessed of high spirit and high ambition. Lincoln chose the Whig, the weaker of the two parties, and the one that was opposed by most of his friends. There are no definite facts to give us light, but there is much reason to feel that he arrayed himself with the party that was less strongly allied with slavery.

Douglas, with a like inconsistency when looked at with regard to his place of birth, chose the Democratic party, though he was a native of Vermont. Looked at from other viewpoints his choice was easily explicable. It is natural that a young man, frankly and aggressively ambitious, should ally himself in beginning his political career with a party that was best able to push him ahead. Supported by the stronger political party, Douglas forged ahead with greater rapidity. He became the favored son

of the party, and with his own native brilliance enhanced by each new prize won, he was in the closing years of his second senatorial term the most powerful figure in either house of Congress, if not in the entire nation. Some strength that had been lost to him and his party in his own State and the North generally, as the result of his support of the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, had been won back by his refusal to back the so-called Lecompton Constitution, by which it was hoped to get Kansas into the sisterhood of States without the formality of having the question referred to the vote of the people of the territory. This refusal had been given despite the urging of the President, and with a curtness that left Buchanan strongly disposed against him. He had missed the Presidential nomination in both 1852 and 1856, but by no wide margin. Like Clay and Webster, however, he had lost little else, and retained the vast power that his ready eloquence, his energy and aggressiveness had brought to him; to which should be added an almost intuitive knowledge of the things that please the masses of men, coupled with a willingness to do the things that would so please them, even to the point of forgetting the consistencies. This man knew the price to be paid for a satisfied ambition, and was not disposed to refuse to pay it.

The Republican party held its nominating convention in June, 1856, and named Abraham Lincoln for the place of Senator. He delivered a notable speech, in fact one of the most notable that he had yet made. He analyzed and held up to the convention the errors and fallacies of the court in rendering the decision on Dred Scott. But first he had made use of a certain ancient phrase, taken from Holy Writ, one that was a part of the consciousness

of the nation. This was done to set forth clearly, so that every one might understand, just where the nation was heading. The speech in the main was simply a powerful argument against the reasoning of the court, but because of the phrase used and the fact that the phrase mentioned set forth more clearly and fixed so deeply in the minds of the people, the conditions that fronted the Republic, it has ever since been known as the "House Divided Against Itself Speech."

Then he went on to intimate almost to the point of directly charging that between ex-President Pierce, Senator Douglas, Chief Justice Taney, and President Buchanan, there had been a common purpose to enact pre-arranged Congressional legislation, court-sanctioned and executively approved, for the purpose of putting an end to the agitation over the slave question. And under his skillful massing of the evidence presented, this conclusion of his looked to be easily warranted. The opening paragraphs of that speech follow:

"If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could better judge what to do, and how to do it. We are now far into the fifth year since a policy was initiated with the avowed object and confident promise of putting an end to slavery agitation. Under the operation of that policy, that agitation has not only not ceased, but has constantly augmented. In my opinion, it will not cease until a crisis shall have been reached and passed. A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved—I do not expect the house to fall—but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing,

or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction; or its advocates will push it forward till it shall become alike lawful in all the States, old as well as new, North as well as South.

“Have we no tendency to the latter condition?”

“Let any one who doubts carefully contemplate that now almost complete legal combination—piece of machinery, so to speak—compounded of the Nebraska doctrine and the Dred Scott decision. Let him consider not only what work the machinery is adapted to do, and how well adapted; but also let him study the history of its construction, and trace, if he can, or rather fail, if he can, to trace the evidences of design and concert of action among its chief architects, from the beginning.

“The new year of 1854 found slavery excluded from more than half the States by State constitutions, and from most of the national territory by congressional prohibition. Four days later commenced the struggle which ended in repealing that congressional prohibition. This opened all the national territory to slavery and was the first point gained.”

The nomination given Lincoln, as had been expected by the leaders of the Republican party in Illinois, had neither been expected nor approved by the leaders of the Republican party in the East. Many, like Horace Greeley, believed that Douglas would have been the wiser choice of the party, despite his unsympathetic past on the slavery question. They felt now, since he had refused to sponsor the Lecompton Constitution, which was framed for the purpose of assuring Kansas to the pro-slavery

group, such a service merited commendation on the part of the North, and that with the added support thus to be given and his heavy following among the Democrats, he could be made certain of victory and thus aid in putting a check to the forward movement of slavery. Possibly this was soundly reasoned, but the Republicans outside of Illinois plainly had more confidence in the Senator than did the men who had known him more intimately. Many of these had the same feeling that had caused Herndon to exclaim when on a visit to the East, he had been advised by Horace Greeley with regard to supporting Douglas: "Forget the past, sustain the righteous,"—"Good God, righteous, eh!"

Douglas reached Illinois in July. Thanks to his stand in the Lecompton matter and his bold independence in his dealings with President Buchanan subsequent to this, it was a far different return from that of four years earlier when he was even jeered and hooted when speaking in Chicago. In his first speech delivered after his return at this time, the Senator at once launched into the many fallacies that he discovered in the speech delivered by Lincoln a month earlier. While never discourteous to Lincoln, who was present on the platform, the Senator charged with much force that by his speech he was arraying the North against the South and the South against the North, or as he put it: "In other words Mr. Lincoln advocates boldly and clearly a war of the sections, a war of the North against the South, of the free States against the slave States—a war of extermination—to be continued relentlessly until the one or the other shall be subdued, and all the States shall become either free or become slave." It was a powerful argument and displayed with

clearness the danger to be apprehended by such ideas as had been advanced by Lincoln at the time of his nomination.

A week after the Chicago speech there was another at Bloomington in which Douglas gave further notice to the "House Divided Against Itself." Again Lincoln was present. The following day there was another speech of similar tenor at Springfield. The Senator kept pointing his guns at the speech of Lincoln. To him, that "House Divided Against Itself" in no wise applied to the United States, and Lincoln had done a dangerous thing in advancing such a proposition. Lincoln had not been present that day, but many of his friends had. That night he replied. Already there had begun between these two antagonists a new battle that would make all the others look like a play of children, and which the men of after years would call epochal.

Seven days after replying to Douglas in Springfield, Lincoln sent a formal challenge asking that the Senator meet him in a series of debates throughout Illinois. Following some negotiations as to the details, a few days later Senator Douglas notified Lincoln that he designated the places and times for their joint discussion, as follows: Ottawa, La Salle County, August 21; Freeport, Stephenson County, August 27; Jonesboro, Union County, September 15; Charleston, Coles County September 18; Galesburg, Knox County, October 7; Quincy, Adams County, October 13; Alton, Madison County, October 15. He agreed that they should alternately open and close the discussion. Each was given one hour when opening the argument one and a half hours when replying, and a half hour for closing.

It is needed to recall at this time that the position of Douglas was much superior to that of Lincoln. The latter was only a private citizen who had served one term in Congress. Douglas had been a member of the State Supreme Court, a member of Congress, and was now closing his second term as Senator with a brilliance second to no man in that distinguished body; his political prestige probably surpassed any man in the nation, regardless of party. Recalling this, it is easier to realize the high courage of the man and his supreme confidence in himself. It would have been easy enough for the Senator, and with no loss of prestige, to have disregarded or declined the challenge from one who had no claim to his own high station. There was little for him to gain in such a contest, and in such a situation there is always much that may be lost. It is added proof of his courage that he was fully aware of the great skill of Lincoln in argumentation. Had he not himself said four years earlier that Lincoln gave him more trouble than any man in Congress?

In Ottawa, Illinois, about eighty-five miles from Chicago, there was great excitement on August 21, 1858. Most of the seven thousand inhabitants were in the streets and on the roads that very hot day. There were many whose faces were strange to Ottawa; probably there were more of these than of the natives. Both natives and strangers, moved by a common impulse, made their way toward an open square in which there was a newly erected platform. Soon there was such a jam of humanity around this platform that only the efforts of a strong man could make a way from the outer edges of that

crowd to the platform. It had taken near a half hour's time to clear a way to the platform for two men, one some six inches taller than the average of the crowd and the other six inches shorter.

The shorter man began speaking, and the most spectacular battle between two men whose battles had extended over twenty years had begun. Stephen A. Douglas, with his heavy booming voice spoke for one hour. Abraham Lincoln, in his high pitched almost tenor voice then spoke for one and a half hours. At five o'clock when Mr. Lincoln ended his speech, the crowd after two and a half hours in the hot sun was still sturdily holding its place, and it was not until shortly after five-thirty when the heavy voice of Senator Douglas ceased after a half hour's closing argument that it melted slowly away.

Soon there was only darkness and empty space, and profound silence, where before there was the intense light of the summer sun, and densely packed humanity, and wild cheering. And out on the roads that had been seen dust enveloped, in the last rays of the sun, gleamed here and there, vying with the fire-flies, lanterns that lighted the way for vehicles bearing to their homes some of the rustic multitude that had stood four and five hours that day, and thus lightly paid to hear Lincoln and Douglas in the first of their seven joint debates, the most momentous that had taken place in the annals of America. And if we go far beyond the American land and the American annals, we may still find no debates so freighted with the possibilities of good and ill for mankind as those between these two men.

The Ottawa debate was followed by the other six, the final one delivered at Alton. These had been rightly de-

clared by the Louisville *Democrat* to be the ablest and most important that had ever taken place. They were the first ever reported in full for American newspapers.

How did the two compare in these debates? It is certainly not easy to discover from the highly biased press of that day. But from the few sources available not thus vitiated, it appears that there were few men of intelligence, whose judgments had not been warped by partisanship, who did not come to realize in the course of these debates that Douglas, despite his larger reputation, had met an opponent who had as much fertility of resource as himself, and perhaps a greater depth of comprehension. Douglas had more of boldness and more of oratorical form. Lincoln, more of a certain subtle sarcasm and calm self possession. Both had full confidence in their own powers and there was little to choose between them.

One of the notable features of the debates was that of questions propounded to each other. These were so framed as to develop party weaknesses or personal inconsistencies. Douglas began this form of attack in the opening debate at Ottawa by asking some half dozen. Lincoln in the next debate at Freeport, propounded four such questions. One of the questions thus asked was regarded by many of his friends as highly impolitic. He persisted in having the Senator give an answer to this question: "Can the people of any United States Territory, in any lawful way, against the wishes of any citizen of the United States, exclude slavery from its limits prior to the formation of a State Constitution?"

This was no new question in that day when close tests were being frequently devised to keep pace with the fre-

quent shifts of importuned and embarrassed statesmen. It had been asked many times. Answered in the affirmative, it placated the men of the North and irritated those of the South. Answered in the negative, it placated the men of the South and irritated those of the North. The friends of Lincoln were convinced that the opportunistic Douglas, making his appeal to the men of a northern State, would make the answer that was calculated to bring the result he sought, and so win additional strength. They therefore begged that he refrain from putting this question, but in vain. That he deliberately sacrificed the Senatorship to attain the Presidency as some have claimed, seems altogether improbable. Lincoln was no visionary, and had a close knowledge of the uncertainties of politics, and would not have taken a certain loss in the hope of an uncertain and improbable gain postponed for two years after date. It is probable that he asked the question, knowing that in Illinois, where there were enough pro-slave sympathizers to count in any election, it would serve its purpose no matter how answered; the shift of a few thousand votes might easily make the difference between success and failure in the election.

Douglas did not answer the question directly, but what he said amounted to an affirmative answer; and doubtless that answer in connection with the position he had taken on the Leecompton matter weighed heavily against him and possibly cost him the Presidency two years later.

The campaign went on with increased bitterness, and three days before the election there is a letter from Hurd to Theodore Parker, the New England theologian, that gives some idea of how far this bitterness had gone, as well as something as to the rancour that prevailed in

the State against the Irish people. The letter reads as follows:

“Springfield, Illinois, October 30th.

“Friend:—Today is Saturday and in a little while Mr. Lincoln opens on our square, close to the state house on the great and vital and dominant issues of the day and age. We feel, as usual, full of enthusiasm and hope, and there is nothing which can well defeat us but the elements, and the wandering, roving, robbing Irish who have flooded over the State. This charge is no humbug cry: it is a real and solid and terrible reality, looking us right in the face with its thumb on its nose. We, throughout the States have this question before us: What shall we do? Shall we tamely submit to the Irish, or shall we rise and cut their throats? If blood is shed in Illinois to maintain the purity of the ballot-box, and the rights of the popular will, do not be at all surprised. We are roused and fired to fury. My feelings are ideas to some extent and therefore cool—I try to persuade both parties to keep calm and cool, if possible; but let me say to you, that there is great and imminent danger of a general and terrible row, and if it commences, woe be to the Irish—poor fellows!

“You know my position now, and let me state to you that I am amidst the knowing ones, clubs, county committees and state committees, leaders, sagacious men, etc., and from all places and persons comes up this intelligence. All is well. I myself fear and am scolded because I cannot feel as I should—as others do. My intuition—brute forecast, if you will—my bones, tell me that all is not safe; yet I hope for the best. How are you—are you up

and walking about? Quit reading and writing, if you can, and go off on a spree.

“Your friend,

“W. H. HERNDON.”

On Tuesday, November 3, 1858, men in every part of Illinois made their way to the polling places and there registered their will. They said who should represent them in the United States Senate for the succeeding six years. Voting, however, was not directly for the candidate for that place, but for members of the Legislature which in that day elected the Senators. When the votes were counted it was seen that while Lincoln had received the largest popular vote, the Douglas men had won the Legislature and with it the prize of United States Senator. Douglas was triumphant in the hardest fight of his career.

While he had lost the fight which had been so hard fought, Lincoln had gained a nation wide reputation, and many who saw in this Senatorial fight only an outpost engagement of the great decisive battle which was to follow two years later, saw also in him the leader who would bring that battle to a glorious end.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

ABRAMHAM LINCOLN had become a national character. By defeat he had achieved a recognition of his genius for public discussion that knew no state limits. In his defeat for Senator he had aroused a nation-wide admiration. But being a man of limited means, his long absence from his law business had caused him an appreciable loss of income and had drawn so heavily on his limited reserves that he had considerable difficulty in meeting certain campaign expenses. But he had no thought of abandoning the struggle that had thus far been advanced by men who loved freedom and hated slavery. His attitude in this is shown in the following letter:

“Springfield, November 19, 1858.

“Mr. Henry Asbury.

“Dear Sir:—Yours of the 13th was received some days ago. The fight must go on. The cause of civil liberty must not be surrendered at the end of one or even one hundred defeats. Douglas had the ingenuity to be supported in the late contest both as the best means to break down and to uphold the slave interest. No ingenuity can

keep these two antagonistic elements in harmony long. Another explosion will come soon.

“Yours truly,

“A. LINCOLN.”

In December, 1859, he visited Kansas, where he made speeches at Atchison, Leavenworth and other towns. Already, there is occasional mention of the name of Abraham Lincoln for President. At first he rather discouraged the idea when it was broached directly to him. Sometimes this is done by a play of humor, at others doubts are expressed as to his capacity to fill the place. It is easy to understand that these represent only the man's unwillingness to appear over-anxious or too ambitious for the highest honor in the gift of the nation, but they have been quoted often by some who appear to feel that Lincoln was in doubt as to his ability to fill the place. There is no reason to give such a view any weight, for the known facts make it clear that he not only did not have any hesitancy as to his own ability to fill the high office but took steps that were calculated to enable him to attain it. From the time when it appeared that he was being seriously given weight as a Presidential possibility, Lincoln is shown to have adopted any honorable means that appeared likely to promote his candidacy.

It is well known that both Lincoln and Herndon had open access to the columns of the Illinois *State Journal*, and it is certain that Simeon Francis, its owner and editor, constantly stood for such policies as would advance the chances of Lincoln. It is known that when the large German population of the United States, and particularly of Illinois, was affronted because of the adoption in Mass-

achusetts of a constitutional amendment requiring of foreign born citizens a seven years residence as a qualification for voting, the *Journal* was alert in printing Lincoln's disavowment of the measure. Lincoln had given a letter setting this forth to Dr. Theodore Canisius, a prominent German of Springfield and the editor of a recently started German language paper. In his letter, dated May 17, 1859, Lincoln had said in part:

"As I understand the Massachusetts provision, I am against its adoption in Illinois, or in any other place where I have the right to oppose it. Understanding the spirit of our institutions to aim at the elevation of men, I am opposed to whatever tends to degrade them. I have some little notoriety for commiserating the oppressed condition of the Negro; and I should be strangely inconsistent if I should favor any project for curtailing the existing rights of white men, even though born in different lands and speaking different languages from myself."

In a short accompanying letter, Dr. Canisius had said:

"This letter of one of the gallant champions of our state is in accordance with the views of the whole German population, supporting the Republican party, and also with the views of the entire German-Republican press."

Plainly, Lincoln did not mean to let the irritations of the people of Massachusetts impair his popularity with the large German population in Illinois, practically all of whom were affiliated with the Republican party. Dr. Barton has related some further facts along this line, tending to show Mr. Lincoln's far-seeing thoughtfulness in advancing his presidential aspirations.

The following facts, however, the public did not know,

and they are of interest and importance. Doctor Canisius was in financial straits. He owed his landlord, John Burkhardt, for rent and perhaps also for money advanced. Burkhardt had acquired, under chattel mortgage or otherwise, a title to the property of the newspaper. Lincoln through Canisius purchased Burkhardt's title and became the owner of the *Staats-Anzeiger*. The transaction occurred immediately after the incident of Lincoln's letter to Canisius, which was evoked by an inquiry from a committee of German citizens in Springfield.

Lincoln had learned the value of the press. He was a constant contributor to the columns of the *Journal*, many of his contributions appearing as editorials. The plan for the propagation of his nomination was in a large sense a plan to use the newspapers of Illinois. Lincoln knew that while the Chicago *Tribune* and many of the down state papers were committed to him, the chief German paper in Illinois, the Chicago *Staats-Zeitung*, was for Seward. He knew that it would advance his interests if a well-edited German newspaper could be depended upon to stand for the Republican party first, and in due time announce itself for Lincoln.

On May 30, 1859, a contract wholly in Lincoln's handwriting, was drawn up by Lincoln and signed by himself and Theodore Canisius. In the agreement it was stated that the type and other equipment were the property of Lincoln, by virtue of Lincoln's purchase of the same from Burkhardt. Canisius was granted the free use of this property for the publication of a German newspaper, which was strongly to support the Republican party, Lincoln, as owner, was authorized to take possession and dispossess Canisius. It was stipulated also that the paper,

while published in German, should carry occasional articles in English. The contract was written on the two sides of a single sheet of legal cap, and the second page was only partly filled. On December 6, 1860, a month after Lincoln's election as President, he wrote a supplementary endorsement, filling the blank space. Therein he certified that Doctor Theodore Canisius had faithfully fulfilled the obligations of the contract and satisfied all financial claims of Lincoln, who therefore, for a valid consideration, conveyed the type, paper and good will to Canisius.

Not only was Lincoln working wisely and energetically to secure the nomination for himself, but men elsewhere and circumstances directly and indirectly conduced to that end. That tide, which had been mentioned as a part of the affairs of men, was flowing strongly in his aid. Among the men who contributed somewhat to the end was his chief opponent, Mr. Seward. This, of course, was an indirect and unconscious contribution. Mr. Seward had frankly told an audience in New York of an "irrepressible conflict between opposing and enduring forces," and had further said, "it means that the United States must and will, sooner or later, become either entirely a slave-holding nation or entirely a free labor nation." Men, who believed this probably as fully as himself, held the thing to be unspeakable, if not unthinkable. And they began from that time to fear that the leading candidate for the nomination by the Republican Party was too radical for that party's success. This may appear strange indeed, when it is recalled that some four months earlier, Lincoln, too, had had something to say to the people of Illinois that sounds remarkably like the things Mr. Seward

had just said. It was on June 16, 1858, that he had told his audience at the convention in Springfield: "A house divided against itself can not stand. I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free."

This contribution of Seward's became the more decisive because of the actions of another man who had no thought of contributing to the nomination of this man or that man, but who longed mightily to break the chains that bound some four millions of black men. This man, John Brown had lived through the average span of life before bursting portentously on the stage of national affairs. The Fugitive Slave Law had been in its way a triumph for the slave-holders, but in the light of after events it is seen to have been the costliest of triumphs, because it was one of the large factors that led to the production of one of those epoch-making books which change the current of human affairs. The Kansas-Nebraska Act had been another triumph for the slave-holding group; but it, too, had been dearly bought, for in the end it had made John Brown, as we now know him.

This man was of the stock of the Puritans, a descendant on his father's side from one of the men of the Mayflower, and his father's father had been among the soldiers of the revolution. On the mother's side he came from a man who sought a haven in this western continent from Amsterdam, Holland. His mother's father, too, had been among the men of the Revolutionary War. Brown, himself, had grown up in the rough school of the frontier life of that day. His father had moved to Ohio when the son was five. Possibly many adversities gave to Brown much of the austerity, the taciturnity, the

sternness, that was so characteristic of the man. But however austere and taciturn, and whatever of sternness there was in his make-up, beneath the cold exterior there was a warmth of sympathy for human suffering and human wrongs. With increasing age, he learned more and more from escaped slaves, making their way to Canada through the aid of sympathetic white men and women, so systematically contrived and accomplished that it had ever since been called the Underground Railroad.

With the passing of the Kansas-Nebraska Act he heard more often stories showing the determination of the slave dealers to force their cruel traffic into all its broad areas. Then, too, there were stories of men who had gone there, some merely to gain a measure of its fertile acres and others in the further hope of securing the land for freedom, but who had been bullied and beaten and sometimes killed by slaveholders.

Five of his sons chose to dare the dangers of settling in that land. Soon they were writing back to their father and telling of the hardships of life in Kansas, and above all other needs they called for guns. And now the father at the age of fifty-five, an age when many men have become little but memories of their past selves, turns his face to distant horizons. With him went his youngest son, a lad of eighteen, and a son-in-law. Seeking to ease the heavy sorrow of parting, he said to his wife and the remaining members of his family: "If it is so painful for us to part with the hope of meeting again, how must it be with the poor slaves, who have no hope?"

After some sixty days the little party was at the end of the dreary overland trip. It was then October, and the winter was not far off. That first winter in Kansas was

the hardest he had seen outside of two or three in the Adirondack mountains where he had made his home for many years. But here there were horrors unknown back in his mountain home; insufficient food, sickness, no medicines, lack of fit clothing and shelter.

Far worse than any of these was the deadly, hard hatred of men. Not the Indian whom he had so often heard termed savage; of these there were not a few, but from them he received no hurt. No, it was men of his own kith and kin who came from the South, of the same land of which he came from the North, and which they both were pleased to call their native land. These men hated him and his and were ready to kill, because they understood that he and his were come to Kansas to interfere with the liberty, claimed by these men of the South, to enslave some other men and women and children whose skins happened to be dark.

With two groups of men holding such divergent ideas, war was the necessary and early sequence. Both sides killed their opponents with much of the freedom that characterizes the licensed killing of orthodox war. John Brown was one of the outstanding leaders. As such, he at times commanded harsh and possibly cruel measures. What leader in war has not done this, and who shall judge his necessity? For commanding that five of the enemy be shot, whose participation in numerous killings has not been seriously denied, he has been called a murderer by his enemies and deprecated by his friends. But others have known that with these vast prairie lands of Kansas on fire with the hatred of the slaveholders, it was necessary that there be fire with which to meet that fire. These believe that when the terror of the methods of

the pro-slavery men became unbearable, it was as Dr. William E. Barton has said: "Then rose old John Brown of Ossawatimie. He had no theory that slavery was to be dealt with tenderly. Much that he did is open to debate, and has been and will be hotly debated. But this he did that needed to be done: he made the doctrine of squatter sovereignty a two-edged sword, whose keener edge was turned to the throat of the slave-holding power. For a time there was civil war in Kansas. The term 'Bleeding Kansas' was used in Congress and throughout the nation. Not all the blood was shed on one side. The Emigrant Aid Societies organized in New England were as determined as the 'Border Ruffians' of Missouri."

The day came when the tide of pro-slavery sentiment began to fall back from the firmly resisting state lines of Kansas. And for this beneficent fact there is no larger single cause than this man John Brown. But for him it was not enough that there was to be peace in Kansas; it was not enough that there was to be freedom in Kansas. For him wherever there was a state of slavery there was a state of war; and he was eternally a soldier in that war. There was now a price on his head; the governor of Kansas offered three thousand dollars reward, and the President of the United States two hundred and fifty dollars reward for this old man. He remained in Kansas for a few months more and then made his way to the East. But he had not for one moment forgotten that there was still war in the land so long as there was still slavery in the land. With Kansas assured to freedom, he was now enabled to undertake a new crusade.

About the details of this new crusade all was mystery, but chosen men were permitted to know that a new and

greater blow was to be struck for freedom. He had left Kansas finally in 1858. In New England he went from place to place and while there was no sounding of trumpets, thanks to the price that was on his head, he preached his crusade as zealously as ever Peter the Hermit urging Europe on to the rescue of the Holy Sepulchre.

Mysteriously he had come and gone from New England. One night, cool with the coolness of mid October, in the densely wooded mountains where Virginia and Maryland and West Virginia came together, John Brown gathered about him twenty-one younger men, black and white and fully armed, and proceeded toward Harper's Ferry, near six miles away. In the early morning the United States arsenal located there, was captured. The news spread rapidly in all directions. In a few hours the little band was penned up and the following morning were captured by a detachment of Federal troops. Two of the old man's sons and eight of his men were killed, and seven of his men were wounded.

There was wild excitement for weeks after the raid of John Brown. The whole South was in a furor. It was only natural that all who had spoken against slavery should now be suspected as parties to the plot. There was the usual form of a trial which is seen when a whole community is set against a man. In fact it was a mere passing of a judgment. Whatever dignity there may be in the orderly processes of the courts is lost in such cases. In the fierce hysteria of the crowd demanding its victim, there is something animal like—nay, wolf like. There was no touch of the high or noble except that presented by the old man, who, hardly recovered from his wounds, bravely and serenely faced the men who would decree

no other than death for him and his; who argued calmly and firmly with them, pointing to the terrible wrong they were committing by slavery, but who asked no favor and who on the second day of December, 1859, with never a regret, passed into the long night of eternity.

John Brown had done his work well. But that which he had done best in life was the manner in which he parted from life. Here and there, in the far corners of time and space, have been men who accomplished this terribly commonplace but at the same time terribly venturesome act of dying in such manner that ever-more their fellows have remembered them rather more for how they died than how they lived. Upon these, their fellows have conferred the guerdon of nobility with more assurance than any other. So was it with John Brown. The gibbet had made him a martyr.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

ONE day in October, 1859, Lincoln had come into his office with a letter with which he was highly pleased. The letter was from the Plymouth Church of Brooklyn, at that time the most famous in the land, with Henry Ward Beecher at its head. The committee of a lecture bureau of the church had written to invite Lincoln to deliver a lecture at that church.

If the notice of other men is ever a sufficient basis for pride, then Lincoln had the most ample basis for any pride or pleasure that resulted from that invitation. Certainly, it was a most unusual thing. If in the year of 1859, some church in Chicago or St. Louis had invited some eastern man of note to deliver an address, there would have been no particular occasion for pride or pleasure, because the thing would have been too much in the way of the expected. But this was a reversal of the natural course of things, and by that fact enough to draw especial attention to any man. In that day much that was worth while might have been readily conceded to the west, but for culture men looked to the east. Verily in the America of that day men still looked for the wise men to come out of the east. However that was, of the three lectures provided for that season the first was by

Montgomery Blair, of a noted Missouri family, whose relations with Lincoln would soon be that of a member of his cabinet; the second was by Cassius M. Clay of Kentucky, already well known as an orator, who also would become a part of the Lincoln administration as Minister to Russia; and for the third and final lecture the call had come to Lincoln.

After conferring with his friends he had stipulated that his address should be of a political nature, and at once set about preparing it. Naturally the preparation for this speech was on a more thorough scale than any other he had made. He saw, as did all his friends and some of his enemies, that this was his crucial test. He was now carrying the war for the nomination into the land of the enemy. What some of the papers of his own State were saying as to his eligibility to the Presidency meant something, but the successful issue of this invasion would mean vastly more. In his delving for material with which to build his argument, he stopped nowhere short of the bed-rock of fact. The situation demanded the strongest effort of a strong man, and such he gave. But however arduous had been his work of preparation, when the day came for his departure, it is easy to believe as his partner has asserted: "We had many misgivings—and he not a few himself—of his success in the great Metropolis."

There had been some change in the plans as originally laid down. Possibly this was brought about by Lincoln's stipulation that the address should be political; possibly the excitement resulting from the raid and execution of John Brown was the underlying cause. Lincoln had not received notice of, or at least had not understood the nature of these changes, until after arriving in New York.

It was necessary, therefore, for him to make some changes in his draft of the speech. The change in plans placed the speech making at Cooper Institute and under the auspices of the Young Men's Republican Union of New York. The change was fortunate and gave an added importance to the affair. The hall was larger and there is reason to believe that the crowd was more representative. Arriving in the city on Saturday there was time to make the necessary changes in his speech which was to be delivered Monday, February 27, 1860. On Sunday he heard a sermon by Henry Ward Beecher and learned something of the reasons for the change in places. Monday night came and Abraham Lincoln stood before the most critical and distinguished audience he had ever faced. He was introduced to the audience by the editor of one of the great metropolitan papers, a poet and man of letters, William Cullen Bryant.

Among the younger men of the press was Noah Brooks. He had heard Lincoln in the West. He had been impressed, but tonight Brooks is among those of little faith, and says to himself: "Old Fellow, you won't do; it's all very well for the Wild West, but this will never go down in New York." Brooks was expecting one of the stump speeches, interspersed with jokes and witticisms. That speech never came, but of the one that was delivered Brooks had difficulty in finding words of fit praise, but was sure that "no man had ever made such an impression on his first appeal to a New York audience."

The doubting Brooks was not the only one who had difficulty in finding appropriate words of praise. The editor himself, Greeley, as prodigal in praise as his reporter, had said: "Since the days of Clay and Webster, no one

had spoken to a larger assembly of the intellect and mental culture of our city." But the *Tribune*, most powerful of America's journals, gave but a part of the chorus of praise. Four morning papers gave the speech in full, and it was reprinted in pamphlet form.

In connection with this address at Cooper Institute, Joseph Medill has told how Lincoln had visited the Chicago *Tribune* before the trip to New York, and had asked him and Charles Ray, editor, to look over the manuscript of his speech and submit to him any notes as to changes of verbiage they thought desirable. Medill adds, describing their methods and the result: "One read slowly while the other listened attentively, and the reading was frequently interrupted to consider suggested improvements of diction, the insertion of synonyms, or points to render the text smoother or stronger, as it seemed to us. Thus we toiled for some hours, till the revision was completed to our satisfaction, and we returned to the office early next morning to re-examine our work before Lincoln would call for the revised and improved manuscript. When he came in we handed him our numerous notes with reference places carefully marked on the margins of the pages where each emendation was to be inserted. We turned over the address to him with a self-satisfied feeling that we had considerably bettered the document, and enabled it to pass the critical ordeal more triumphantly than otherwise it would. Lincoln thanked us cordially for our trouble, glanced at our notes, told us a funny story or two of which the circumstances reminded him, and took his leave."

A few days before his leaving for the Cooper Institute address, the Chicago *Tribune* had printed an editorial

declaring for Lincoln for President. Naturally then, Medill and Ray were elated when the New York papers arrived at their office filled with Lincoln's speech and the words of praise which all carried. For both there was the added pleasure of having had some part in putting the final touches on the now famous speech. Medill adds: "Ray and I plunged eagerly into the report, feeling quite satisfied with the successful effect of the polish we had applied to the address. We both got done reading at the same time. With a sickly sort of a smile, Dr. Ray looked at me and remarked, 'Medill, Old Abe must have lost out of the window of the car all our precious notes, for I don't find a trace of one of them in his published talk here.' I tried to laugh and said, 'This must have been one of his waggish jokes.'"

Now the most powerful paper of Illinois was ardently supporting him for the Presidency, as well as a majority of the other papers of the State. Added to this the papers of the largest city of the country were giving Lincoln serious consideration as a candidate; indeed, after Seward they were giving him more consideration than any other candidate. With the applause of the men of New York echoed through the whole land by their press, serious consideration in all sections had to be given to the claims of this man. These could no longer be waived aside with talk of "a smart country politician."

Lincoln had gone from New York City to Rhode Island, where on the evening following his speech at Cooper Institute he addressed an impressive crowd at Providence. From there he went to New Hampshire, and spoke at Concord and Manchester. In the afternoon speech at Concord he had been referred to as the next

President of the United States. Surely the invasion of the east is bearing rich returns. There were a dozen or more speeches in New England, and then a visit to his son Robert who was studying at Exeter Academy.

The impression made in New England added to the reputation gained in New York, and when he returned to Springfield, while there were no crowds awaiting him, it was somewhat in the role of a conqueror. Naturally his friends were jubilant and there were many congratulations. He had spoken in seven States within five months, and this as a result of his personal appeal only. There could be no doubt that such a man was a national figure. Here in his home State the movement to make him President was already well under way, but with little in the matter of organized effort. As early as the fall of 1858, soon after the defeat for Senator, the *Democrat*, of Chicago, Congressman Wentworth's paper, had mentioned Lincoln as a desirable candidate for Governor or the Presidential office. In the next few months a number of the country papers of the State definitely proposed his name for the place.

Jesse W. Fell, Republican State committeeman, appears to have been the first to broach the subject directly to Lincoln. On Fell's first approach, Lincoln displayed the hesitancy natural in such a situation. Sometime later he gave Fell the sketch of his life which was asked of him. In it he said: "My parents were both born in Virginia, of undistinguished families—Second families, perhaps I should say." Here is a modesty not often seen. That he was now clearly committed to the race for the Presidency is made certain by a letter to Norman B. Judd, member of the National Committee of the Republican party, in

which he said: "I am not in a position where it would hurt much for me not to be nominated on the national ticket, but I am where it would hurt some for me not to get the Illinois delegates. Can you help me a little in your end of the vineyard?"

Perhaps the earliest concerted effort of his friends occurred early in 1860, when a number of them met in the office of O. M. Hatch, Secretary of State. Herndon mentions among others present, Norman B. Judd, chairman of the Republican State Central Committee, Ebenezer Peek and Jackson Grimshaw, along with others of equal prominence in the party. Grimshaw relates: "We all expressed a personal preference for Mr. Lincoln, as the Illinois candidate for Presidency and asked him if his name might be used at once in connection with the nomination and election. With his characteristic modesty he doubted whether he could get the nomination even if he wished it, and asked until the next morning to answer us whether his name might be announced. Late the next day he authorized us, if we thought proper to do so, to place him in the field." To the question from Mr. Grimshaw, whether if the nomination for President could not be obtained, he would accept the post of Vice President, he answered that he would not; that his name having been used for the office of President, he would not permit it to be used for any other office, however honorable it might be."

It is clear that Lincoln knew what he wanted, and had the confidence to make the fight for that and that alone. The fact that Norman B. Judd so managed things that the National Republican convention met at Chicago in May, 1860, went far in aiding Lincoln in securing the

prize he asked for. The Illinois State convention met at Decatur just a week prior to the National convention at Chicago. Here, too, the tides in the affairs of men were moving decidedly in favor of Lincoln. He had been in doubt as to the propriety of attending, but decided to do so, and came into the convention hall after the session had commenced and was given a place on the platform.

It was not long after his arrival until there occurred one of those strange incidents by which men are swayed by elements in their make-up that have little or no relation to reason; elements that for a time give the lie to all thought of the mercenary and selfish as the underlying motive in their actions. Richard J. Oglesby, an ardent friend of Lincoln's, had heard reports of his rail-splitting days and conceived the idea that among men, so many of whom were near to the soil, it might add some strength to the Lincoln movement to have it made clear that the well-known lawyer had seen harder days. Becoming acquainted with John Hanks, who had split rails with him, it was arranged between them to bring the rail-splitting days of their favorite dramatically to the attention of the convention.

Shortly after Lincoln's arrival, Oglesby moved the chairman that leave be given a Democratic friend to appear before the body. This privilege being secured, a minute later from the far end of the hall a group was seen headed by John Hanks, until this time a Democrat, bringing two weather worn rails with flags and a banner with this announcement: "Abraham Lincoln, the Rail Candidate for President in 1860. Two rails from a lot of 3,000 made in 1830 by Thomas Hanks and Abe Lincoln—whose father was the first pioneer of Macon County." There

was a momentary silence, and then a wild burst of applause. Then there were shouts for the candidate. Somewhat surprised, he faced Hanks and his rail bearing committee. To cries from every part of the hall of "Lincoln! Lincoln!" he replied: "Gentlemen of the convention, I cannot say that I split these rails, but I have split a great many just as good." Again there were waves of applause. Later amid the wildest enthusiasm the convention instructed its delegates to vote as a unit for the rail-splitter candidate at the forthcoming National convention, now less than a week off. The hopes of the Seward men so long sustained by a numerous following in the northern part of the State were now at an end.

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

ONE week after the State convention, a much larger convention with a much larger prize to offer, convened in Chicago. On that day of May, 1860, men from the near and the far corners of the nation were to be seen tramping the monotonously level streets of Chicago in numbers such as that city had never before known. There had been excursion rates on all the railroads and strangers had simply poured into the city to the number some said of 40,000. Somehow men realized that they were facing a memorable event, something tremendous, something that was not merely the quadrennial ceremony by which political parties sought to put their partisans in control of the government of the United States.

The center of gravity for all these strangers, as well as for the great mass of those who recognized Chicago as home, was a very large, squat frame structure near the center of the business of the fast growing city. There was nothing of the beautiful about this building, and not anything imposing, unless it be the somewhat extended area it covered of 180 by 100 feet, of which there was much boasting by the natives. It was too new to possess a history, and came into being merely as an incident connected with a historic event. This building was known

as the Wigwam and was built for the purpose of housing the convention. For several days before the date announced for the opening of the convention the streets had become more and more crowded. At the corners, and frequently in between, were crowds of excited, gesticulating men asserting very knowingly the merits of this or that candidate. Here and there numerous parades wound their way through streets heavily covered with dust. Many of the men were enthusiastically yelling the names of their particular Presidential favorites. It was noticed that among the paraders the Lincoln men appeared as numerous as the Seward men, although these latter showed to a better advantage, due to a somewhat military precision and on certain occasions to a large brass band which had come with the New York delegation of about two thousand.

Most of the visitors had come to the city either hoping or fearing that Seward was to be nominated. Probably their first intimation of the strength of Lincoln was in the enthusiasm they saw among the rank and file of men in the streets. Local pride was counting heavily for him. Still, there were few who gave much attention to politics who did not feel that Seward would win the nomination. The opposition to him rarely exhibited more than a hope that something might turn up that would dash the hopes of Seward and favor the men they preferred. It was Seward against the field.

At noon on Wednesday, May 16, 1860, this building held some ten thousand souls when the Republican National convention was called to order, and around it were as many more. In the building were near a thousand newspaper men. Edwin D. Morgan, Governor of New

York and Chairman of the National Republican Committee announced the convention as ready for business. David Wilmot, whose provisos tacked onto so much of the legislation of the Polk administration had received the support of candidate Lincoln, was then introduced as the temporary Chairman. George Ashmun who had long been eminent among the Whig leaders in Congress but who had joined the newer Republican party, was elected permanent Chairman. This man had been in Congress when Lincoln was there, and had joined him in harassing President Polk's administration for the manner in which the Mexican War had been brought about.

Certain routine matters having been disposed of, the next matter of large importance was the adoption of a party platform, as the declaration of party principles had already come to be known. There had been no difficulty in working this out by the committee assigned for that purpose, but when presented to the body of the Convention there was a short discussion over one of its clauses. This was due to an allusion in the platform to the Declaration of Independence. Joshua Giddings, of Ohio, moved an amendment setting forth the allusion in the very words of the immortal document: "That all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." The amendment carried. His amendment was consistent with the past of Joshua Giddings. It was he who had asked for a Congressional investigation when the Negro servant at the house where the congressman boarded, had been seized and sold to the far South after having paid most of the price for which he had been promised his freedom.

After the adoption of the platform the selection of the party nominee was the next important business. At the end of the second day, the "wise men" of the party were still convinced, probably a bit more convinced, that the great prize would be awarded to Seward. At this time there had been no success in the movement to unite the opposition to Seward on one man. Horace Greeley and some others had worked hard to accomplish this in favor of Edward Bates, of Missouri, whom they regarded as the man who could draw the largest votes in certain of the western States. At the Tremont House, headquarters of the Lincoln forces, Judge David Davis, Norman D. Judd, Jesse Dubois, Leonard Swett, Richard Oglesby, Judge Stephen T. Logan and many other friends, were attempting to unite this same opposition on Lincoln. In the evening of Thursday, Greeley saw no hope of defeating Seward and telegraphed his paper to that effect. Thurlow Weed, commander-in-chief of the Seward forces, saw nothing but victory ahead. He appeared to dominate the convention. But the Lincoln leaders kept hopefully on. They had no Weed at their head with authority to make such engagements as would bring results, but they promised with as much assurance as Weed himself. Thus they secured Indiana and then Pennsylvania, after the delegates of that State shall have given a complimentary vote to the native son, Simon Cameron. Lincoln had been telegraphed, asking his consent to make certain agreements, and had sent this answer: "I authorize no bargains and will be bound by none." And his friends more intent on making a President than obeying the orders of a friend and candidate, had proceeded to promise whatever was asked of them.

On the following day, it was not long developing that even "wise men" cannot always forecast what other men will do. With all other intervening business disposed of by the convention, and with victory assured, as they believed, the Seward group that morning had staged for the city an immense parade headed by their great band, the most imposing that had been seen in the West.

It is possible that this parade, intended almost as a triumphal affair may have had some little to do with the result of the balloting that followed in the convention hall. It is altogether probable that some who took part in that parade in honor of their favored man for the nomination, might have otherwise been earlier at the Wigwam and by that fact secured admission. It is shown that the possibility was recognized by the Lincoln forces. This was accomplished by Ward Hill Lamon, who though much younger had long been one of the closest intimates of Lincoln. Lamon had secured such large numbers of admission tickets for the session of Friday, that it had taken a great part of Thursday night to get them duly signed. This accomplished, however, he had seen to it that the Lincoln followers were to be on hand at the earliest hour for admission to the scene of the great struggle. They obeyed orders and entered the Wigwam at an early hour in such numbers as to shut out all late comers; and once there they missed no opportunity of exerting whatever power may be generated by enthusiastic approval. On that last day of the convention there was never a doubt as to which of the candidates was the favorite with the unofficial masses in the building.

At ten o'clock the convention was called to order. There was the usual prayer, wherein Mr. Albert Shaw

in his highly notable contribution to the literature of this period, tells us the clergyman thus invoked the Deity in bringing his supplication to an end: "We entreat thee, that at some future but not distant day, the evils which now infest the body politic shall not only have been arrested in their progress but wholly eradicated from the system, and may the pen of the historian trace an intimate connection between that glorious consummation and the transactions of this convention. Oh Lord, our God, Thou art in Heaven and we on earth, therefore should our words be few. Our prayer is now before Thee. Wilt Thou hear, accept and answer it, for the sake of our Redeemer!" Not long would the process of eradication be postponed, and intimate indeed would be the connection between that convention and "that glorious consummation" asked by the preacher.

There were no nominating speeches at that period, and having gained the chairman's attention and it being declared that nominations were in order, William H. Evarts, of New York, proceeded: "I take the liberty to name as a candidate to be nominated by this convention for the office of President of the United States, William H. Seward." He was quickly followed by Norman D. Judd, who said: "I desire, on behalf of the delegation for Illinois, to put in nomination as a candidate for President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln, of Illinois." In quick succession, William L. Dayton of New Jersey, Simon Cameron, of Pennsylvania, Salmon P. Chase, of Ohio, Edward Bates, of Missouri, were placed in nomination. After that there were some brief speeches seconding the nominations presented.

Now the balloting begins, and the various state dele-

gations are answering the call with the number of votes they are casting and for whom. When the roll has been exhausted, it is known that Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee have taken no part in the convention. An ominous thing is this. It is Secession's first step.

The total vote of the convention is 465. The first ballot gives Seward 173½ votes, Lincoln 102, Simon Cameron 50½, Salmon P. Chase 40; most of the balance of the votes are divided between Dayton, McLean and Collamer. Amid the most intense excitement the chairman of the convention announces that no candidate has secured a majority of the vote cast, and soon thereafter the count begins on the second ballot. On the announcement of the count it is seen that Seward has gained eleven votes and now totals 184½ votes. This is something; but it is also seen that Lincoln has gained seventy-nine votes and now has 181 votes. This is well nigh everything, as is seen on the third ballot which immediately followed when the opposition to Seward shifts in mass to Lincoln, bringing his total vote to 231½, only one and a half short of the required 233. At this time, before the official announcement of the result of the ballot, Carter, of the Ohio delegation, made himself heard above the clamor and announced a change of five votes of that delegation from Chase to Lincoln. This was followed by a general shift of the vote cast for other candidates to the Illinois man including at last the 180 votes cast for Seward, whose floor leader, Evarts, moved to make the nomination unanimous.

Pandemonium such as has rarely been seen, even in these conventions where pandemonium is the expected

result, followed quickly the announcement of Lincoln's nomination. A salvo of one hundred guns from the roof of the nearby Tremont House, headquarters of the Lincoln forces, answered the boom of the cannon that had announced the result from the top of the Wigwam. Even this was almost lost in the continuous applause that came from the thirty thousand men clustered about the Wigwam. There could be no further business following the emotional madness of this multitude, and the convention adjourned until five o'clock.

At that hour the delegates returned, somewhat exhausted and somewhat devoid of enthusiasms. The remaining business was quickly disposed of. Hannibal Hamlin, of Maine, was nominated for the office of Vice-President on the second ballot. The convention was now at an end. Verily, not before, and not since has a political convention accomplished so happily the work set before it. And surely not before and not since has any such body had problems so weighty depending on the soundness of its judgments. Fortunate was it indeed for Americans that in the paramount question before this convention, the matter of a candidate, judgment was as it was.

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

THE days that passed between November 6, 1860, and March 4, 1861, brought about much that was to try the soul of James Buchanan, President of the United States, and much that was to test the patience of Abraham Lincoln, President-elect of the United States. Swift was the sequence of events following the decision made by the American people on that election day. Ominous threats of a dissolution of the government heard occasionally before the election, were now the regular order of things. The general talk of secession by men in high confidence with the southern people, began to take the form of action.

Even prior to the election such talk and threats were so open as to cause the aged Winfield Scott, highest military officer of the nation, to give them special notice. In a letter addressed to President Buchanan and to John B. Floyd, Secretary of War, on October 29, 1860, he expressed apprehensions for the safety of the forts located in the South. He suggested that they at once be prepared for emergencies. Perhaps the patriotic mind of the General who had brought the war with Mexico to a victorious end, could not conceive of active disloyalty by men highly placed in the government. But not long would the old soldier, himself a Virginian, be permitted to hold the

virtue of his fellows in such high esteem. His suggestions were thwarted by the active opposition of the war secretary, also a Virginian. Through the same agency vast quantities of war material were shifted from northern armories to the various arsenals of the South. It appears that by one order in that year of 1860, one hundred and fifty thousand rifles were transferred from the North to the South. All these movements were so contrived as to leave the government he had sworn to serve, disarmed and impotent before those who ere long would be marching against it as open enemies. It would be hard to find another instance in which indecision, incapacity and disloyalty so completely combined to welcome and aid insurrection in attempting to destroy a sovereign government. Never were the ends of proposed insurrection more favorably served by those who should have extirpated it.

President Buchanan discovered immediately after the election of Lincoln that his Cabinet had split along sectional lines into two almost equal and hostile groups. Gen. Lewis Cass, of Michigan, Secretary of State; Isaac Toucey, of Connecticut, Secretary of the Navy; Jeremiah Black, of Pennsylvania, Attorney General; and Joseph Holt of Kentucky, Postmaster General, formed one group; Howell Cobb of Georgia, Secretary of the Treasury; John B. Floyd, of Virginia, Secretary of War; and Jacob Thompson, Secretary of the Interior, formed the other. Of the two groups it was the latter, southern and proslavery, that had decisiveness and cohesion, where in the northern group there was only indecision, confusion and lack of cohesion.

Something of this is seen in President Buchanan's message to Congress a month after the election. In it the

President declared that "no State had a right to secede," but in the same document disclaimed all right to prevent such action. This was in accord with the opinion given by the Attorney General, a Pennsylvanian like the President. As neither of these two eminent statesmen belonged to the large non-resisting Quaker group of their State, it seems strange that their political philosophy should conceive the idea of a political entity that was entirely devoid of defense against attacks from its own creatures.

President Buchanan had been bold even to belligerency with other nations, but no President was ever so timid before his own. The new Governor of South Carolina had called a State convention for December 17, 1860. Within three days it had passed an ordinance "dissolving the Union now subsisting between South Carolina and other States under the name of United States of America." Four days later South Carolina was proclaimed to be a "separate, sovereign, free and independent State." How easy it was for these men of the South to find precedents for the things they desired to do. And yet the President of the United States and his chief law officer were utterly unable to find the precedent laid down by Andrew Jackson less than thirty years before.

In Springfield only the largest degree of patience enabled Lincoln to possess his soul while such things were being done and left undone at Washington. With only the will, and neither the authority nor the power to act, Lincoln could do nothing but sit by and watch the nation fall apart, a house divided against itself.

There were other troubles, too, that threatened to break even the strong constitution of this man. There was

a veritable flood of office seekers who had to be given at least some personal notice. These of course accompany every election, but at that day no party machinery had been devised to relieve the party head of this burden. There is reason to believe that these importunate fellows came nearer exhausting the patience of Lincoln than any other thing connected with his tenure of office. Closely connected with this was the matter of those who wanted to give advice on appointments to be made and policies to be pursued. Many old friends felt the natural urge to make suggestions as to policies and appointments, and some of them felt aggrieved that their suggestions had been ignored.

The choice of a Cabinet gave not a little trouble, though probably less in proportion to its importance than some lesser offices. The fact that Lincoln in his march toward the Presidency had been always considerate toward opponents, left it easier to approach them. This he did with such sincere graciousness that even where there was no desire for office these men felt the force of his plea that it was their duty to serve. It is probable that men who had been seriously considered for the Presidency would have really preferred in the first days of keen disappointment following the convention to have remained out of the Cabinet. Certainly a number of Seward's friends urged him to a course showing his resentment, but he and the others gave way before Lincoln's earnest expression of need for their aid.

He was therefore able to bring to his Cabinet the strongest men who had sought the office that he had won. The fact that Seward and Chase were joined with him added greatly to the public confidence. And Bates, too, helped

much in the border States. Even Cameron brought an important following, although his selection met with bitter opposition. The Cabinet as finally selected, consisted of William H. Seward, of New York, Secretary of State; Salmon P. Chase, of Ohio, Secretary of the Treasury; Simon Cameron, of Pennsylvania, Secretary of War; Montgomery Blair of Maryland, Postmaster-General; Gideon Wells, of Connecticut, Secretary of the Navy; Caleb B. Smith, of Indiana, Secretary of the Interior, and Edward Bates, of Missouri, Attorney General. Lincoln had sought and found the strongest men in the country for the tremendous work that lay ahead. The fact that some of them, until that convention in Chicago had decreed its will, had loomed larger in the public mind than himself did not deter him from seeking their service; the further fact that some of these men possessed a self esteem that led them to feel that the man chosen as Chief Executive could be regarded as secondary in an administration that contained themselves, did not bar them from membership in his Cabinet.

A lesser man under similar conditions would likely have felt himself somewhat overshadowed by the names he had gathered around him. Those who have been misled by the apologetic and deprecatory remarks frequently indulged in by Lincoln concerning his own ability, may discover the true conditions in this willingness to stand beside the ablest men to be found with no thought of being dwarfed by the comparison. There is reason to believe that the man not only held no personal jealousies of these other men, but that he discovered no reason why he should entertain such jealousies. Doubtless, Abraham Lincoln possessed a measure of humility such as is found

rarely, even in men of the most limited capacity; and just as doubtless he possessed a confidence in his own capacity that is rarely found even in men of the highest achievement. And so it is that he did not often ask the advice of others and even less often took such. Yes, the man had humility, but that humility was related to the Almighty. Humility such as his might give an added deference to his treatment of other men, but it took away not one jot of his confidence in himself.

Herndon stated that "no man ever asked less aid than he; his confidence in his own ability to meet the requirements of every hour was so marked that his friends never thought of tendering their aid, and therefore no one could share his responsibilities."

More and more there were worries because of the things left undone by the confused and distracted man who sat as President in Washington. Counted with him, of course, was that portion of his Cabinet whose understanding of their oaths of office and duty to the government they had sworn to serve and support, was obscured by their stronger desire to assure success for the march of insurrection already under full headway in the South. There were worries, too, by reason of the things that were being done by those who held views somewhat in common with his own, men who sincerely desired to avoid a break-up of the Union. It was the old need of having to be saved from one's friends.

The Crittenden Compromise, presented to the Senate by Senator Crittenden, of Kentucky, was of this class. It proposed a Constitutional amendment of six articles. The first, seemed to offer something of substance to the anti-slavery people of the North, for it resurrected that part

of the Missouri Compromise that had prohibited slavery north of $36^{\circ} 30'$. All the rest of the intended compromise appeared to have been written by one so unnerved by the insistent demand of the dominant element of the South for immediate secession, that he saw nothing but the necessity of conceding all that had ever been asked in past days by the extremists of the slavery group. Senator Trumbull, and others in close touch with Lincoln, by the opposition to the measure indicated his desire for its defeat.

The Crittenden Compromise was an attempt to carry on the work of Henry Clay by finding some middle course that would be acceptable to the greater portion of both the slave-holding as well as the greater portion of those opposed to slavery. It was not, however, a middle course, for its effect would have been little more than to concede to the South more than was ever before demanded by the South, and more than was ever proffered by the North.

A proposition so one-sided in its sectional leanings would never have been advanced except in the general fear that gripped so many, a fear that a stampede of southern States was about to take place. Ten years earlier such a proposition could never have been given serious consideration by a statesman. One from the South would not have expected compliance with so great a demand, and one from the North would not have even entertained such a proposition, knowing that it would be political suicide. Probably the most interesting of the six articles is the last which makes the proposed changes in the Constitution unchangeable. Observation of the rapid shifts of public opinion as were then taking place on a vast scale and with such rapidity as had never before been seen,

should have made the fallacy of such proposals obvious. On all sides old landmarks of statecraft were being swept away, and yet the venerable Kentuckian assumed to introduce what has always failed, a perpetual law. And what was more futile still, this perpetual law was to be the main support of a wrong principle, always an unstable thing. It was to perpetuate slavery. It is true that Lincoln discussed some such proposition with Thurlow Weed, but it is clear that he meant merely to have demonstrated its impracticability, for he proposed unanimous support knowing there could be no such.

There were many reasons why Lincoln should desire the defeat of such a proposal. All his life he had been opposed to slavery, but recognized that it was in accord with the Constitution to the extent that it existed in the original slave States. To this extent he was willing to abide by the Constitution, but this did not mean that he was to give up the hope and belief along with the men who framed the Constitution, that ultimately slavery would be brought to an end. Senator Crittenden's Compromise was in fact a proposed guaranty that slavery should never become extinct. It was doubtless some relief to Lincoln that the special committee to whom it was referred discovered so much disagreement among its members, and that its meetings dragged on from the twenty-first day of December, the day after the South Carolina ordinance of secession, at a slower rate than the march of insurrection in the South. As a result a number of the committee found it necessary to withdraw, because of acts of secession withdrawing their States. The Compromise was kept before the Senate until the day before Lincoln's inauguration.

Another ambitious effort to save the Union came from Virginia. The Legislature of that State passed resolutions inviting all the States to appoint commissioners to a peace conference. This conference was held at Washington and presided over by ex-President John Tyler. There were a total of one hundred and thirty-three members from twenty-one states. A committee consisting of one from each State was appointed, to "report what they may deem right, necessary, and proper, to restore harmony and preserve the Union." On the fifteenth of February there was a vote on certain resolutions by this committee. These and other resolutions reported from this committee were somewhat similar to certain parts of the Crittenden Compromise. After being indorsed by the peace conference these resolutions were communicated to the Senate and referred to a committee from that body consisting of Senators Crittenden, Bigler, Thomson, Seward and Trumbull. The resolutions were voted on just before the Crittenden Compromise and were rejected by a vote of 34 to 3. The Compromise was then defeated by a close vote of 20 to 19. Lincoln's intimate friend, Lyman Trumbull, voted against the measure, and Stephen A. Douglas, his historic political enemy, voted for it, still in opposition to the man who had now won the decisive battle and the Presidency in their warfare of a quarter of a century. Some other proposals went the same way and were lost in the final rush of business accompanying the close of Congress. All the efforts to avert the break-up of the government came to nothing despite the sincerity of those who made them.

It is thought that Lincoln opposed these efforts at compromise with the secessionists, because he tended to be-

lieve in the earlier stages that the South would not carry its movement to the extent of separating from the other States, but were intent only on securing the fullest advantage of the threat. In holding this view in the earlier days, he did not conceive the farthest limit of inaction, amounting almost to acquiescence, that became the policy of Mr. Buchanan, the extreme feebleness of whose efforts to check the secession movement undoubtedly gave it an added momentum.

He finally realized the full limit of the movement, but yet did not see fit to change his opposition to the compromises offered. His views were not set forth for the public but there were occasional statements to his intimates that made his attitude clear. It is known that he advised against Illinois sending representatives to the peace conference. He felt that such action might be taken to indicate something of his own policy in advance of his taking the oath of office. At that time, too, he had come to believe that the South was in no mood to accept any compromise that did not require of the North the sacrificing of fundamental principles. A weak man may sacrifice any principle and a strong man may sacrifice anything but a principle. Lincoln was not only a strong man, but was by his very nature, with its heavy touch of the fatalistic, incapable of compromise, not only of a principle but of anything save that which he might concede without a compromise.

There were threats that he would never be inaugurated, and he did not want to have it believed that he accepted any of these compromises to insure that event; nor did he wish to give any added sense of power to the men who were threatening to break up the government. The

remark is ascribed to him: "He would rather be hanged by the neck till he was dead on the steps of the Capitol than buy or beg a peaceful inauguration." On the question of slavery he was willing to go as far as the Constitution but no further. He had now come to believe that the conflict could not be avoided, and he was ready to take the full responsibility for its outcome. It was at this time that he stated: "The tug has got to come; and better now than at any time hereafter." There is another statement ascribed to him, and as related there is much reason to believe it, in which Dr. Jayne tells of Lincoln saying to Herndon: "Billy, I hope there will be no trouble; but I will make the South a graveyard rather than see a slavery gospel triumph, or successful secession destroy the Union." On this question, his first principle, Andrew Jackson could not be more uncompromising. The thought of war with all its hurt to humanity must have cut deeply into his sensitive soul, but it was less terrible to him than the compromising of principle.

For so sensitive a man, probably the thing that gave him most pain at this time was the criticism, brutally cruel, that came to him from those who were friends to freedom. Demanding that assurance be given of a quick end to the thing they hated, and receiving no such assurance, the abolitionists were often as merciless in their criticism as the secessionists. That the man faced the heaviest problems that ever confronted an American President in no wise deterred them from abuse without limit. Wendell Phillips, born an aristocrat, but for these last twenty-five years, with Garrison, the highest of the priests of freedom and equality, is so wrought up that he forgets his acquired status and reverts to that of his birth. He

refers to the man who is to fill the chair of Washington as "this huckster."

With none of the fiery impulsiveness that made some of these men ready to strike down the thing, regardless of all other results, Lincoln's determination to destroy slavery was probably more fixed than theirs. His practical mind, however, made him instinctively know that men possessed of great riches would never give it up because of some moral argument. He had no thought of destroying the Union over slavery, and he had no thought of allowing the South to go its way with its wealth of slaves. In both these propositions he found himself differing with many of the extreme abolitionists like Garrison and Phillips. Strange as it may seem, these with many of their group who had been so prodigal of words that certainly helped bring on the storm, now, when the first rude gusts of secession blew heavily from the South, were ready that the South should go its way. Phillips talked flippantly, of speeding the "parting guest"; Greeley, at first would have "let the erring sisters depart in peace." Whittier, the Quaker, true to the peaceful tenets of his group, would do likewise. Had these men their way, slavery would have continued indefinitely for nine-tenths of the colored people. In bidding the "erring sisters go their way in peace" these abolitionists would have gotten rid of slavery in the Union, but left it firmly fixed where practically all the slaves were; that is in the seceding States. But the man in Springfield, knowing this, thought always of ending a great wrong, and not merely of getting it out of his and their house. Fortunately for millions of colored people his wiser counsel prevailed, though at the cost of the most destructive war

ever seen on the western continent. For him, then, there could be no flippancies of speech; for him there could be no replies to angry and misunderstanding men, whether of the North or of the South. His every word and sentence was to be weighed and its effects calculated before uttered.

To better understand the heavy obstacles confronting Lincoln, it should be recalled that the final alignment of States did not come about until after his inauguration. There was no certainty as to what would be the relative strength of the parties to the great conflict. The southern States renounced the Union separately: South Carolina, first, December 20, 1860; followed by Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia and Louisiana, all prior to Mr. Lincoln's inauguration, March 4, 1861. Virginia seceded in April; Arkansas and North Carolina in May, and finally, Tennessee in June. Missouri and Kentucky never seceded but were always in dispute, and had representatives in both the Congress of the United States and that of the Confederate States.

With such conditions it can be seen that for Lincoln an ill-considered address might swing some State or section into the ranks of the enemy. Such considerations had to be regarded with the North, too, where the support that was to be so urgently needed could be strongly or feebly granted. Nor was his own State free from this danger. Many of the southern counties were much disaffected. In one of these the President ordered the courts adjourned to curb the seditious agitation, and the hostile judge made this entry in the docket: "Closed by order of Lincoln's Hessians." Such was the balance of forces that an untimely statement might mean a difference of

a number of army corps in the death grapple between freedom and slavery, and on the strength of one army corps the result might depend.

These days, some of weary waiting, many of them long extended like evil dreams, were finally at an end. On the evening of February 10, 1861, a man was roping and tying trunks in some rooms of the Chenery House, Springfield, Illinois. After securely tying he labeled them "A. Lincoln, Executive Mansion, Washington, D. C." It was Abraham Lincoln, President-elect, by the votes of his fellows. Democracy for this man was no mere political concept. For him there was no thought of having some other do the thing that he himself, had the strength, skill, and time to do. Well might the aristocrats of the Southland insurgé at the thought of a man who held their ideas of the fitness of things so utterly at naught.

On the following day the heavy grey clouds hung low, and through the misty drizzle the horizon was never far away. But at the railway station in Springfield were some thousand men, women, and children come to wish a last good bye to the man who had so long been one of them and so near to all of them. Some hurried hand-grasps of farewell there were; some eyes were heavily charged with tear drops as the grey clouds above were heavily charged with rain drops. The warning bell of the train, and Lincoln and his wife, and their three sons, entered the train with a delegation of friends.

There was a few minutes' delay and Mr. Lincoln came to the rear platform of the car. Slowly, and in a voice that almost sobbed with the heavy sorrow of leaving, he said: "Friends: no one who has never been placed in a like position can understand my feelings at this hour, nor

the oppressive sadness I feel at this parting. For more than a quarter of a century I have lived among you, and during all that time I have received nothing but kindness at your hands. Here I have lived from my youth until now I am an old man. Here the most sacred ties of earth were assumed. Here all my children were born; and here one of them lies buried. To you, dear friends, I owe all that I have, all that I am. All the strange, checkered past seems to crowd now upon my mind. To-day I leave you. I go to assume a task more difficult than that which devolved upon Washington. Unless the great God who assisted him shall be with and aid me, I must fail; but if the same omniscient mind and almighty arm that directed and protected him shall guide and support me I shall not fail—I shall succeed. Let us all pray that the God of our fathers may not forsake us now. To him I commend you all. Permit me to ask that with equal sincerity and faith you will invoke his wisdom and guidance for me. With these words I must leave you, for how long I know not. Friends, one and all, I must now bid you an affectionate farewell.”

There was a ringing of bells and the train moved on with increasing speed. It was the last view that most of them were to have of the man they loved so well.

CHAPTER THIRTY

THE journey begun by Lincoln had an added purpose to that of simply leaving Springfield and reaching Washington. He was not going directly to Washington. He was to make an almost leisurely journey through the heart of the North. He started his journey with the floods of insurrection still rising in the South, with sedition rampant in the border States, and with confusion and fear gripping the heart of the North.

There were numerous stops, and at most of them speeches. These were necessarily brief and purposely avoided any close discussion of the grave conditions that existed in the South. There was an attempt at buoyancy that gave affront to some of the editors like James Gordon Bennett, of the New York *Herald*, who seemingly expected Lincoln to announce the plans by which national harmony was to be restored. No such announcement came, and Bennett was bitter in his reflections.

At Independence Hall, in Philadelphia, Lincoln participated in raising the national flag with an added star representing Kansas, now entering the Union as a free State. There were to be some further ceremonies before the end of the journey at Washington, but at Harrisburg there was a change of plans and Lincoln went directly

to the Capitol. The change was made on the advice of a number of his friends and supporters, who had learned that there was a plan for his assassination. This was to be brought about while he was passing through Baltimore, the hour of his arrival being known to the conspirators. General Scott and Mr. Seward had learned of the plot at near the same time through different sources. The latter had sent his son, F. W. Seward, with a letter explaining the conditions supposed to exist and advising the President-elect to come directly to Washington. For some time, even before the journey had started, there had been vague rumors of such a conspiracy. At Cincinnati it was said that a hand grenade had been found secreted in one of the cars, and on the Toledo and Western Railroad, it was said, an attempt had been made to derail the train. Both Norman B. Judd and Ward H. Lamon, intimate friends accompanying Lincoln, advised the change of plans. Judd had employed Allen Pinkerton, later to become the most famous of American detectives, to trace down any such plots and the latter reported to Lincoln directly that such a plot existed. Lincoln, while doubting the accuracy of the reports, took the advice of his friends and proceeded directly to Washington, arriving there several hours ahead of the schedule time of his special train. Only Ward Lamon and Allen Pinkerton accompanied him on this last part of the journey.

For eight days he had an opportunity to become acquainted with the sentiments of men in high official position, expressed with the directness that goes with face to face talks. President Buchanan and the Cabinet, much changed by the departure of several of its members who had cast their lot with the Confederacy, received him

cordially. The two houses of Congress were visited where he received from most either friendly or courteous treatment. There was a word with the ancient Chief-Justice, Roger B. Taney, now nearly eighty-four years of age, but whose keen mind had forgot none of the numerous strictures put on him by the man in his presence. To this old man, indirectly, Lincoln owed much. Indeed, it may be doubted if he owed as much to any of his friends as he owed to Stephen A. Douglas, an enemy, and to Taney, who as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court had rendered the decision in the Dred Scott case. Their errors had been the steps by which he had climbed the ladder of fame. Douglas called on him and his oldest political enemy was received as his newest friend. And such they could now be, for at last the two men had found a question on which they fully agreed. The two great sons of Illinois now prepared to join in a common cause. The Union must be preserved.

A day comes, such a day as is seen in Washington at four year periods. The streets are filled with people; for several days ahead the hotels, boarding houses and dwellings with a spare room are crowded. Usually the weather is bad, very bad. On this day it is only ordinarily bad. Always, there is an obvious excitement, and usually a high degree of enthusiasm. On all sides there are soldiers marching full-armed. And on that day their faces have a stern seriousness which has not been seen on other similar days.

Strange and ominous rumors have been afloat for weeks. These rumors have to do with this day and its chief event. It has been repeatedly said that the inauguration of Abraham Lincoln will never occur. Some weeks earlier, Gen-

eral Winfield Scott, replying to an inquiry as to these rumors, has sent this message: "Present my compliments to Mr. Lincoln, and tell him I expect him to come to Washington as soon as he is ready. Say to him that I'll look after those Maryland and Virginia rangers myself; I'll plant cannon at both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue and if any of them show their heads or raise a finger I'll blow them to hell." On this day the old man was ready to keep his word. The day passed without disturbance.

At the Willard Hotel, Lincoln, rising early performs certain duties preliminary to assuming office. At noon in an open barouche comes James Buchanan, President of the United States, perhaps much relieved at the thought of dropping burdens such as no predecessor has ever had to bear. He enters Lincoln's room and soon returns with him, and seated together the two proceed to the Capitol, between lines of soldiers and the vast throngs which fill the streets.

On the east front of the great structure, the corner stone of which had been laid by George Washington, a platform has been extended from the steps leading to the eastern portico, where seats have been provided for officials and distinguished guests. Through a specially built wooden tunnel the President and President-elect make their way into the Senate chamber. The Senators have prolonged their session through the night until daylight, considering a new amendment to the Constitution that some believe will avert the crisis confronting the nation. That amendment would specifically confer on the slave States the right to hold their slaves without interference from any source. If it passes it will be the

Thirteenth Amendment. It is near four years from that day when Congress does agree on a Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution, passed under the administration of the man who is to take the oath of office this day, declaring "that neither slavery nor involuntary servitude except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted shall exist in the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction."

Preliminaries are at an end and Lincoln is about to begin his address. His face, oddly altered by a newly grown beard, is the focus of every eye of this great and curious assembly. Then follows a moment's hesitation, he seeks a place for his hat. A man steps forward and takes it. But why notice so ordinary courtesy? The man who has taken Abraham Lincoln's hat is Senator Stephen A. Douglas. This man takes no half steps. The world knows he has fought against Lincoln; it shall now know that he fights for him.

Silence. And now a high-pitched voice is heard, a voice that seemingly is weak, but yet carries to the farthest reaches of that vast gathering. It is the voice of Abraham Lincoln, son of Nancy Hanks Lincoln, dead since his early childhood; son of humble Thomas Lincoln, dead these many years; son, too, we may add of Sarah Bush Lincoln, step-mother, so near and dear to him, who loves him as her own and who waits back there in Illinois. He pleads with those who would rend the bonds that join these States as a nation. He implores them not to do this thing. It is to the South he makes his plea.

To us today his argument is wholly convincing. Through all this argument there is no word of reproach, no tone of harshness, no touch of ill-will. Always, there

is patience and tolerance and kindliness. And yet, nowhere is there any readiness to sacrifice the beliefs that lie back of his whole life. He would not take from the slaveholder any right given him by the Constitution. But he would not agree that slavery should pass beyond the boundaries of those States where the Constitution had permitted it to exist. And for this, though the words uttered that day ring on for a thousand years, the South has no ears to hear; and though they sound to the depths of the hearts of the vast throng that hears, the hearts of the South are hardened and will not heed.

The high-pitched voice has become somewhat softer, almost it is musically persuasive as the closing words are said; "In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow-countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The government will not assail you. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the government, while I shall have the most solemn one to preserve, protect and defend it.

"I am loath to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union when again touched by the better angels of our nature."

The voice ceases, almost it is a sigh of sadness. Now appears the thin form of the man who has been Chief Justice of the United States for twenty-five years. His ascetic face is the more ascetic above his sombre judicial

gown. The last act of the mighty drama in which he who was the humblest citizen of the lost village of New Salem becomes the first citizen of the nation, takes place. The oath has been administered by Roger Brook Taney. A few minutes more and Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, rides back through Pennsylvania Avenue to the White House.

The story is at an end. The history of the man, now largely becomes the history of the nation. A day comes when his mighty work is near to completion; when there is yet some little period of twilight ahead, wherein he may find rest from his great labor, and surcease from his heavy sorrow. And then by the hand of a mind-warped felon, swiftly falls the night and darkness.

Duncan is in his grave;
After life's fitful fever, he sleeps well;
Treason has done his worst:
Nor steel, nor poison,
Malice domestic, foreign levy,
Nothing can touch him further.

